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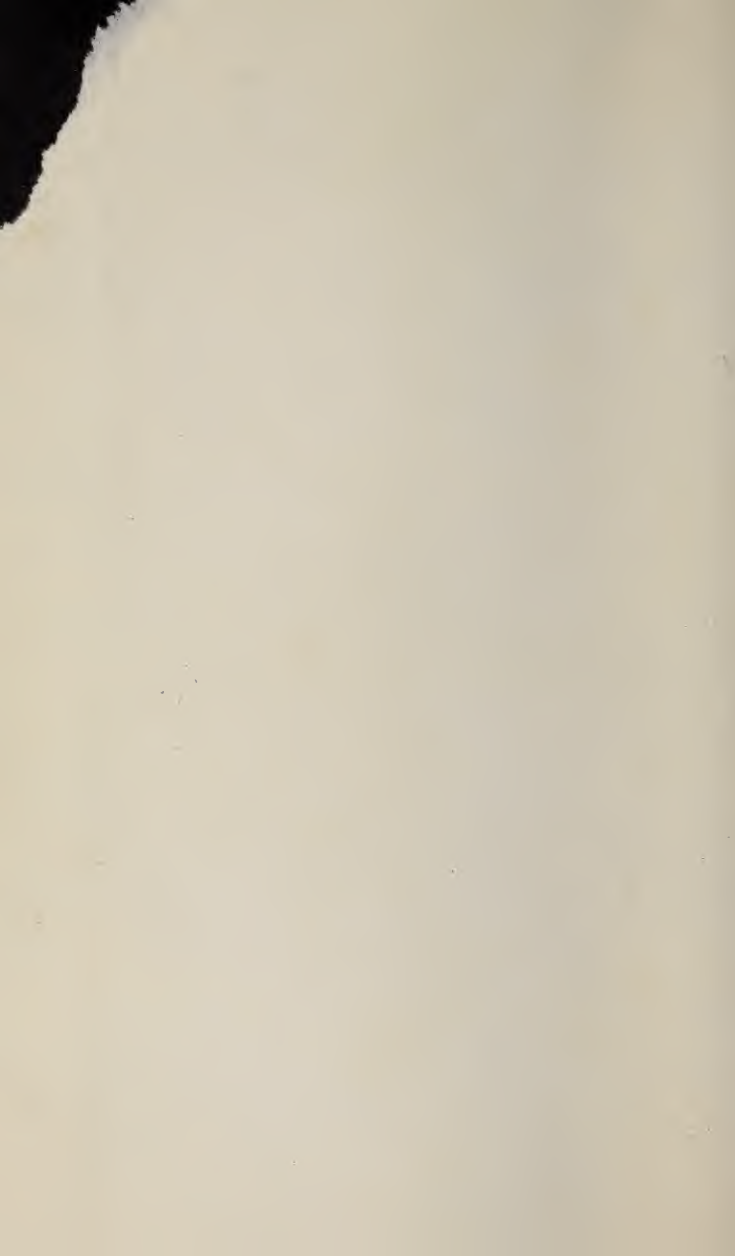
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1814



Jersey. July 1821

~~Whereas we examine the working~~
the works of art may, at first
appear the most finished and
perfect; but when the eye is ad-
ded to pry into their construc-
tion, the nicest workmanship
discovers to be rough and
unfinished. Whereas the works
more gain by the most
careful examination; and
those which, appear on a super-
ficial survey, appear defective.
Hence, the more intimately
we are inspected, discover the
more exact construction and
more ⁱⁿimate beauty. Blain



SECOND EDITION

OF

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL
REFLECTIONS,

ORIGINALLY INTENDED

FOR THE USE OF HIS PARISHIONERS,

BY

Samuel Hopkinson, S. C. B.

FORMERLY, FELLOW OF CLARE-HALL, RECTOR OF
ETTON, AND VICAR OF MORTON CUM HACCONBY.

Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth :

so,

*Thou wilt, probably, come to thy grave in a full age ; like
as a shock of corn cometh in, in his season.*

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. HARRIS,
CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.

1814.

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- Auspices** — protection.
Aggregate — compounded.
Absolution — the act of freeing men from their sins on particular conditions.
Annex — join to.
Adventitious — additional.
A. D. — in the year of our Lord.
Avenue — properly a straight row of trees on the right hand and on the left leading to a place of some note at the end.
Asseveration — assertion upon oath.
Animated — striking.
Axiom — a thing so clear in itself, as not to be made clearer by proof.
Antidote — something given to counteract the effects of another.
Alleviate — to ease.
Avert — to turn aside.
Ascertain — to make certain.
Artificial — contrived by skill.
Author — beginner of a thing.
Atrocious — extremely wicked.
Actuated — influenced.
Arrogate — to claim vainly.
Æra — a period, from which dates are numbered to the end thereof.
Apology — A reason indicating good will towards the person offended.
Actuality — reality.
Annexation — conjunction.
Argillaceous — chalky.
Adhesive — clinging to.
Appetite — desire of sensual pleasure.
Avocation — some thing, that calls a man out of the common tract.
Abstemious — temperate.
Arranged — put in order.
Apprehension — suspicion of any thing.
Ameliorate — to make better.
Amenable — so subject as to be liable to account.
Annihilate — to reduce to nothing.
Academic — regularly educated in an university.
Barbarous — unacquainted with religion and science.
Beneficed — having preferment in the Church.

- Banner**—a streamer borne at the extremity of a pole or lance either on warlike or festive occasions.
- Baptism** — a religious ceremony.
- Bemoan** — to lament exceedingly.
- Conjoined** — united.
- Creed** — here meaning a form of words wherein our faith is comprehended.
- Ceremony** — an external form in religion.
- Consonant** — agreeable to.
- Commandments** — certain things we are to do or not to do.
- Creator** — that great invisible Being, who bestows existence.
- Compendium** — abridgement.
- Collaterally** — indirectly.
- Corresponding** — answering to.
- Conversant** — acquainted with.
- Converse** — opposite.
- Comment** — explanation.
- Corporal** — relating to the body.
- Cast** — turn of mind.
- Chearly** — cheerfully.
- Condition** — degree.
- Cogent** — forcible.
- Commemorate** — to preserve the memory of something by some public act.
- Combination** — union for some good or bad purpose.
- Corroborate** — strengthen.
- Class** — rank.
- Circumjacent** — lying around.
- Composed** — made up.
- Culture** — improvement.
- Consummate** — complete.
- Completion** — accomplishment.
- Code**—Book of Laws, as the New Testament is the Christian.
- Catholic** — universal.
- Cavern** — a dark hollow place under ground.
- Cliff** — a steep rock.
- Consequence** — what follows from any principle or cause.
- Catalogue** — list of particulars.
- Continual** — without opposition.
- Candidate** — one who solicits advancement.
- Devotee** — one seriously given up to religion.
- Designated** — marked.
- Delivered** — given out.
- Detrimental** — injurious.
- Dehort** — dissuade.
- Deport** — conduct.

- Dissipation — an unsettled state of body and mind.
 Devotion — acts of religion.
 Diversified — differently constituted.
 Discriminate — distinguish.
 Docility — readiness to learn.
 Diametrically — in direct opposition to.
 Defaulter — one who omits what he ought to do.
 Dawning — beginning.
 Deportment — behavior.
 Decrepit — worn out with age.
 District — region.
 Delineated — drawn out on paper, in such manner as to enable the traveller to find his way either by sea or land.
 Deviation — quitting the right path.
 Dissolve — to cut short or disperse.
 Defame — to injure a man's character.
 Degenerate — to fall from a higher to a lower degree.
 Dainty — either real or artificial food out of the common tract.
 Detract — to draw from.
 Disciple — one who endeavors to learn the principles of a superior.
 Depart — to leave the world.
 Disseminate — to spread every way after the manner of seed.
 Exertions — efforts little short of labor.
 Ejaculation — something uttered with earnestness.
 Exhilarates — cheers.
 Emanations — flowings.
 Effusion — here, donation arising from free bounty.
 Epitome — short account.
 Exemplify — shew by example.
 Eternal — referring to a future world.
 Exuviae — shells, scales, or external skins of animals, as of snakes, thrown off.
 Elements — the various matter of which the world is composed.
 Emblem — a representation of some moral notion by a figure.
 Extraparochial — in no parish.
 Foibles — from what no man is free.
 Fervency — earnestness.
 Fragment — an imperfect bit.
 Fountain — first cause.
 Fortuitous — accidental.
 Fallacy — deceitfulness.
 Flagrant — notoriously bad.
 Fossil — a substance dug out of the earth, which once belonged to some animal or vegetable body. It is, also, ap-

- plied to such instances as are frequently found upon or near it's surfaces.
- Frivolously — having no object of importance in view.
- Foliage — leaves and small branches of the tree taken aggregately.
- Failing — an imperfection short of actual sin.
- Gentile — a person of any nation, except the Jewish.
- Genius — the ruling power of men and things. Also an ingenious turn of mind.
- Geniality — fertility.
- Gulf — an arm of the sea stretching into land.
- Generation — an age.
- Harm — some injury short of misfortune.
- Hereditary — what passes from person to person by right without a will.
- Incipient — beginning.
- Initiated — admitted.
- Institution — establishment.
- Inordinate — excessively irregular.
- Indiscriminately — without distinction.
- Intemperate — without rule.
- Immaterial — spiritual.
- Infinitude — without number.
- Incompatible — inconsistent with.
- Institution — establishment.
- Interval — space of time or place between two given points.
- Irrevocable — what cannot be called back.
- Impede — to hinder.
- Indifferent — neither very good nor very bad.
- Imposition — placing upon.
- Indication — shewing.
- Intercourse — run of business between people.
- Imperiously — positively.
- Introduction — act of bringing in.
- Island — land surrounded by water.
- Impregnated — so filled with foreign matter as to have the appearance of one body.
- Incontrovertible — not to be disputed.
- Impending — hanging over just ready to fall.
- Invoke — to call upon with earnestness.
- Indiscriminately — without distinction.
- Immutability — not liable to change.
- Incumbent — lying upon.
- Investigation — close of examination.
- Judgement — faculty of discerning right from wrong.

Knarled — full of hard knots so as to defy any engine to divide it except a saw.

Locality — situation either in a moral or religious view.

Lybian — applied to places very widely extended.

Leniently — moderately.

Lugubrious — mournful.

Licence — a written or printed form given by one in authority to do some particular thing.

Licentiousness — contempt of all restraint.

Meridian — noon.

Mandate — command.

Militates — contends against.

Mental — relating to the mind.

Meritorious — deserving of reward.

Malevolence — inclination to hurt others.

Modification — proper arrangement.

Monopolize — to have the sole disposal of.

Measure — proportion.

Mission — state of being sent by high authority.

Monuments — here intended either for good men or countries meriting divine favor.

Miscellaneous — composed of various kinds.

Mine — place in the earth containing metals or minerals.

Maturity — ripeness.

Nice — a city.

Needy — in this instance, one, who cannot afford to brew and perform other domestic acts, which are within the reach of the more opulent part of the community.

Notification — act of making known.

Ordinances — decrees or laws.

Oracle — council given by God.

Organized — so constructed that one part co-operates with another.

Oblivion — forgetfulness.

Occurrences — events expected or not.

Predominate — to over-rule.

Paralytic — destructive.

Proclivity — strong inclination.

Purify — to free from bad qualities.

Perpetration — commission of a crime.

Preventing — going before.

Privation — act of removing any thing from us of which we had been formerly possessed.

Precincts — bounds.

Primitive — first.

Parish — portion of land containing inhabitants.

- Proffered — presented to attention.
 Precarious — uncertain.
 Planet — a moving star.
 Prophet — sacred writer enabled by God to tell future things.
 Permeate — to pass through.
 Perforation — the act of boring a hole through any body.
 Peel — in this sense only applied to the quick noise of thunder.
 Promptly — readily.
 Pestilence — a catching distemper.
 Prime — best part of.
 Ponder — to consider attentively.
 Presage — foreboding.
 Prophane — irreverently to sacred things.
 Pilgrimage — long journey attended with difficulty and danger on a religious account.
 Periodical — belonging to stated times.
 Promulgate — to publish.
 Plurality — more than one.
 Perfidy — want of faith.
 Prohibitory — forbidden.
 Previously — before hand.
 Passive — what cannot act of itself; but receives impression from some external agent.
 Patrimonial — belonging to a father.
 Prolongation — lengthening out.
 Proselyte — one, who comes in as a convert.
 Preaching — act of delivering a public discourse on a sacred subject.
 Quiescent — in a state of rest.
 Researches — inquiries.
 Repugnant — opposite to.
 Revelation — communication of truths from Heaven.
 Revolving — turning over in one's mind.
 Recounting — detailing.
 Rudiments — first principles.
 Retribution — return according to the goodness or baseness of the action.
 Rigor — severest weather.
 Rereward — last reward, which follows in consequence of good conduct.
 Remission — forgiveness.
 Redemption — purchased at the expence of another.
 Rasure — taking out entirely.
 Rend — to tear.

- Relinquish** — give up.
Repentance — sorrow for what is past, attended either with full purpose, or actual reformation of life.
Suspended — implying something to follow.
Sacrament — a ceremony producing an obligation.
Submersion — plunging underneath.
Summary — a short account of.
Sanctify — make holy.
Seclude — shut out.
Sanction — confirm.
Sacrifice — an offering, generally on a religious account.
Subordination — a state of inferiority.
Strata — beds of earth, sand, and clay.
Subterraneous — under ground.
Specify — to describe by some marks or properties.
Source — from whence any thing arises.
Sagacious — quick in its faculties.
Scrutinize — to examine strictly.
Seared — dry and yellow.
Stalled — set fast in bad road.
Sable — black.
Sect — a body of men united in some tenets.
Sustentation — support.
Signet — a precious stone set in a ring.
System — union of many things acting properly together.
Tenets — maxims held to be indisputably right.
Temporal — belonging to the present time.
Tabernacle — place of worship. Also a niche or recess in a wall originally intended for images in Saracenic edifices.
Temper — disposition of mind.
Term — manner in which any thing is expressed.
Trace — to follow exactly.
Trackless — incapable of retaining any marks of what passes over it, as water, &c.
Trait — turn of disposition.
Theatre — scene of public life.
Trial — trouble attended with temptation.
Twilight — the interval between darkness and sun-rise, and between sun-set and darkness.
Tremendous — terrible beyond astonishment.
Tyranny — rigorous commands rigorously executed.
Title — claim to right.
Temple — a place of worship among Pagans as a Church among Christians.
Ultimately — in the end.
Universe — not this earth only; but the creation.

Unsullied — pure.

Unapt — unfit.

Vicissitude — change.

Volcanic — natural eruptions of fire.

Variation — irregular change.

Vilify — to represent a person as bad in the eye of his neighbors behind his back.

Venial — pardonable.

Vivacity — liveliness.

Verge — to bend downwards.

Vigilance — watchfulness.

Vehicle — that, on which any thing is carried.

Warp — to turn from.

Waft — to carry on by an easy, though quick motion.

Warrant — a written or printed form authorizing the person, to whom it is committed, to do some particular thing, generally speaking, not very agreeable to him, on whom it is to be executed.

TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

GEORGE

LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN.

MY LORD,

TWENTY years have elapsed since this little work was offered to the public. I could not, then, aspire to the honor of prefixing your name; but, encouraged by the manner, wherein it was generally received: more especially, by what you was pleased to say on that occasion, which you, since, had the goodness to confirm by a particular instance of your favor, I, now, venture to dedicate to you a second extended edition.

To whom can writings calculated, as I hope this is, to promote the cause of religion, be so aptly inscribed, as to one, who, blessed with great endowments, attained through a

course of virtuous industry from his youth, at a period, unusually early, to the highest rank of his calling, which he has never ceased by his literary and official labors to adorn?

May the salutary influence of your example long continue to animate your clergy, and, while it cannot fail, under an approving Providence, to enlighten the existing race, may it contribute to the general felicity of mankind!

With this ardent and respectful wish,

My Lord,

I am

Your faithful and obliged

SAMUEL HOPKINSON.

Morton, Aug. 20, 1813.

TO
 THE INHABITANTS
 OF
 MORTON CUM HACCONBY.

FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

THE motive, which impelled me to write the first edition for my parishioners at Etton, has, now, induced me, after a long lapse of time, to publish a second, with some additions, on your account. Here it seems expedient to remark, that the foremost duties of Christianity, like the important concerns of common life, generally, take care of themselves: that, few, especially of the younger class, have the ability, inclination, and opportunity conjoined, at the outset of life, to commit enormous crimes. It is an old and just remark, confirmed by the experience of revolving ages, that ' "none became thoroughly wicked all at once." As in virtue, so

in vice, there are different degrees of attainment, which require some time, much practice, and suitable company to mature them. Seldom, for instance, do we hear of men, in plain defiance of laws divine and human, totally and daringly disregarding the celebration of the sabbath, openly and professedly violating God's commandments. What, however, is more frequent, than what is stiled even the better part of the Christian world to be indifferent about the sabbath? Parents, through a culpable fondness entirely to overlook or backward to check the ² early foibles of their children? What is more common, than persons in the higher walks of life being careless about the inferior branches of religion, as privately addressing the Almighty at entering and leaving the church : at the beginning and end of each succeeding day : sitting eagerly down and rising hastily from table, without so much as once mentioning the name of their gracious benefactor : using words in familiar conversation and repeating improbabilities as facts, which, if not a direct breach of the fourth Commandment, are, at the least, not such as become the Gospel of

Christ? However insignificant these and such offences separately considered may appear in our own eye, still, in an aggregate sense, they undoubtedly constitute a very important part in the general failings of Christians. When I reflect on the consequences of that solemn account, which we must all one day give before the righteous judgement of God: more especially, when I, intrusted for a few years with your spiritual things: the notoriety of these defects strikes me with very increased force. Sensibly impressed with such ideas, I, now, commit to your serious perusal, also, the following pages, confidently hoping to instruct the unlearned and not to offend such as are better informed. Having composed the greater part with a view particularly to ground the young and improve the inexperienced in religious knowledge: I trust, that parents and masters will not content themselves merely with reading; but, that they will, also, have the goodness to teach them affectionately to their children, and diligently to their servants: piously endeavouring to apply each to the particular occasion for which it is intended, thereby imitating, in this and in another re-

spect of infinitely more importance, the study of the Holy Scriptures: the very plan recommended by the celebrated Legislator of Israel, who, not satisfied with carefully committing to writing that book of laws received with peculiar solemnity from the Mouth of Omnipotence, on Sinai's top; but, knowing by the melancholy experience of forty years, the infidelity of the people committed to his care: perceiving, upon various occasions, their proclivity to evil and to trample under foot the oracles of God, strictly charges the heads of families not to fail every day, morning, and evening, to read some of the sacred writings to their children, to talk of them while sitting in their houses: while walking by the way, when they lay down and when they rose up: they shall be as the signet upon thine hand and frontlets between thine eyes. Thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house and on thy³ gates.

That my exertions may be crowned with success in promoting the comfort of your minds here, and be followed by the attainment of happiness hereafter, by every one of you, is the ardent hope of your faithful friend,

S. H.

Morton, Aug. 20, 1813.

COMMON PRAYER.

IT is impossible to be present at the celebration of divine worship without noticing various irregularities. Nor are these peculiar to lonely villages far remote from the regions of refinement. They are equally visible in the town and in the city, and no where more notorious than in the largest Churches. Far be it from my intention to give offence in any thing. If, however, with such an object in view, I am likely to incur the imputation of vanity or uncharitableness, I am neither afraid nor unwilling to offend in all. The notion, commonly, entertained of going to church is to address the Supreme Being in prayer. This, it must be confessed, is true in the main, though incorrect in part, as will clearly appear by a candid examination of what is prescribed in our established form.

Some, dreadful to think ! never enter any place to pay that public tribute of adoration,

imperiously required, by God, of every human being, enjoined by the laws of the land, with a degree of liberality unknown to the generality of other countries, and admired by every advocate for civil and religious liberty. Among such as do occasionally attend, how many conduct themselves in a manner sufficient to induce a stranger to suspect religion was not their business, sitting, you see, when they ought to kneel: silent when they ought to speak: speaking when they ought to hear; while others, it is to be remarked, are either dozing away their time in idleness, thinking on temporal affairs, whispering, gazing, or unkindly remarking the foibles of their neighbors, without considering that the service of the church, which can never be properly performed if not properly attended to, consists of parts spiritually differing from each other, as prayers, thanksgivings, instructions, commands, and exhortations.

To caution the unwary, to instruct the ignorant, and to remind the informed, the following suggestions are offered to their notice.

In going to the house of God on the solemn returning day, ponder your path before you

enter the place especially dedicated to the Deity ! Endeavor by the way to cherish such a sense of the divine perfections, as may rouse proper affections in your soul, and preserve a suitable deportment of your body through the different parts of the service. Coming late or departing soon, indicates, at least, an indecorous levity of mind, ill calculated to imbibe good impressions. While you are there, the external habiliments of your body are to correspond, strictly, with the internal feeling of your mind, and both must be suitable to the sanctity of the holy place, as well as to the glory of the divine presence.

1. Prayer is an act of piety accompanied by words and gestures for the acquisition of some present or future blessing, which can never ascend as a grateful memorial before the most High without attention and humility.

Consider, then, before you ask, what it is you ask for, and in asking see that you do not ask amiss.

2. Thanksgiving is a voluntary acknowledgment of what we owe to a daily providence. No one can surely fail to do this, who considers that the divine goodness is not limited to a

few, but, extendeth over all from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

3. Profession is a serious declaration of what we will do, or of what we will not do, according to the tenets of that body to which each belong.

4. Every part of our Service is in a greater or less degree instructive; but, the matchless doctrine of our blessed Lord's sermon upon the Mount, and the rules so admirably calculated for the œconomy of human life in the proverbs of Solomon, are instructions which, if properly attended to, will certainly lead us through Christ to everlasting righteousness.

5. To command implies right and power on the side of the commander. Who can be said to possess these but that Almighty Being, who hath given us a law which shall not be broken? Whether we consider the ten commandments only, whether we extend our attention to the diverse precepts generally interspersed throughout the pages of Holy Writ, the most implicit obedience is indispensably required, to preserve us blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

6. If an Apostle, who witnessed the very miracles, which Jesus did, could so far forget himself as to deny his Lord and Master : if the disciples, who were in the habit of receiving Heavenly doctrines from his mouth, required continual admonitions, more needful surely the caution, now. We are, accordingly, by public exhortations, excited in a public form, to a proper performance of our duty publicly.

From these general remarks, I shall be excused in descending to more minute particulars on the book of common prayer, particularly intended for the use of such in that state of life as have no similar opportunity of improving themselves in this branch of their Christian calling.

6 Aug '21

COMING INTO CHURCH.

The universal tenor of the Holy Scriptures assures us, that God is present at all times, and in all places : that He intimately observes the actions of mankind⁴; but, on the Sabbath Day, which all nations enlightened by true religion, invariably dedicate to his pe-

culiar service, more especially when two or three are gathered together in his name, our blessed Lord hath promised to be in the midst. His word never faileth. Thoroughly assured of this, every one rich or poor, will always endeavor to come to church decently attired, and arriving at his pew or seat, will fall meekly on his knees and covering his face gently with his hand, as utterly unworthy to look up in the divine presence, will immediately offer up some such pious and silent ejaculation as this, imploring God to assist him with his grace throughout the ensuing service.

Assist me, O most merciful God, in my endeavors to behave myself here in thy glorious presence with unfeigned reverence and pious fear : may the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, through the merits of my Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

17 Nov -22

BEGINNING.

The doors shut, every one in his place, silence obtained, and all things set in order: the congregation, after the example of their minister, rising as heirs together of the grace of life, two of the eleven passages from Scripture are audibly read by the former, to remind the latter of their sins, and of forgiveness on condition of their repentance.

Attend, therefore! Ponder them in thine heart! Esteem them as instructions from on High, proceeding originally from God, and, now, repeated by his minister, purposely, on your account!

EXHORTATION.

From the cold and hasty manner, in which this is sometimes passed over, the hearer is led to infer that the reader is mistaken both as to the sense and purport of the whole. Dearly

beloved Brethren ! Here should ensue a pause of considerable length, inviting an awful reverence, the better to prepare the audience by the following affectionate address to the solemn duty of the All-hallowed Day. Instead of this, the reader is too apt to run right on to the next sentence, with which it is not at all connected: proceeding forward and paying too little attention to time, sense, or accent, without producing the good effects, which, from a judicious mode, might reasonably be expected, he soon gets to the end. No part should be repeated, as is frequently done by the mistaken hearer. Every sentence and every word thereof, be assured, ought to be tacitly attended to, because one and all are exceedingly well calculated to prepossess the mind with a high sense of the divine goodness in permitting mankind, thus, to assemble and to arrange their thoughts for what next ensues.

Let these appropriate sentences and words enter so seriously into your hearts, as to induce every one of you to behave yourselves lowly and reverently in God's sight.

CONFESSION.

Following the minister in the exact, timely-repetition of every sentence with a deliberate, plaintive suspended voice bordering closely upon resignation, and laying a particular emphasis upon that attribute, merciful, whereby alone we presume to supplicate his goodness, be careful to call your own ways to remembrance, considering attentively what you have done, which you ought not, and what you have left undone, which you ought to have done, in such manner, as is likely to produce amendment of life, pardon of your sins, comfort here and happiness hereafter.

Reject not then the opportunity publicly proffered you every returning Sabbath Day. There is no man living that sinneth not. Confess your sins, for God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Seeing the incitements to your duty, lose not sight of the reward annexed to the performance of it.

ABSOLUTION.

The minister standing reads this cheerful part of the service with a degree of confident humility to his flock, continuing in awful silence, meekly kneeling upon their knees, under a firm persuasion that if they, relying on God's mercy through Christ, do heartily repent, they will be absolved from all their sins, just as surely as if the Deity himself declared it, for his minister is, now, commanded to make known his good pleasure to the people.

Relying, then, on the promises of God, take courage, now, in the day of salvation, and persevere unto the end.

LORD'S PRAYER.

The congregation just absolved, are, next, emboldened to unite in the audible repetition of that short though comprehensive form, which our blessed Lord hath taught us.

Whoever will compare the infirmities of the human with the perfections of the divine

nature, and consider the importance of every part of this inimitable prayer, will truly deplore the careless manner, in which it is too commonly repeated.

PREPARATION.

The four following sentences must be taken in a figurative sense and pronounced in rising strains of chearful piety. Their design is, evidently, to inspire the congregation with that true spirit of devotion, without which they are justly accounted dead, who, with cold indifference, presume to address their Maker. The mind so prepared, and the congregation rising all at once, the minister, with a voice somewhat increasing, attributes, as is most due, glory to the three distinct persons of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to which the people unanimously assent by the following appropriate and pious answer, As it was in the beginning, &c. The pastor, again, briefly exhilarates his flock, Praise ye the Lord, to which they instantly reply, The Lord's name be praised.

PSALMS.

To the above glorious end, the psalms, a compilation of religious and moral sentiments, pleasing to the most refined capacity, and intelligible to the meanest, admirably calculated to guide us through the present as well as to render us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light in a future world, are to be repeated in alternate verse with the Gloria Patri at the end of each, to remind us of that divine self-same Being, three persons in one God, to whose honor each was composed.

Make us, so sensible of these thy inestimable benefits, O Lord, that we let slip no opportunity thus to praise thee.

LESSONS.

Since certain portions of Scripture are selected for popular edification, whether from the Old or New Testament it matters not, mark them ! Like your ancestors by Mount Sinai, and the Disciples by their Saviour's

side! Learn them and inwardly digest them in such manner as, during the six succeeding days, you may become doers of the word, not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

HYMNS.

After the Lessons we re-assume our adorations in the cheerful repetition of particular hymns.

CREED.

With one heart and one voice we are all next invited to a solemn pronounciation of the creed, not after the manner of a prayer, but as a steady profession of our faith, sentence after sentence, without wavering.

SENTENCES BEFORE THE COLLECTS.

Not sufficient of ourselves to do any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency being of God, we are accordingly incited to invoke his

special presence previous to the collects, wherein we unite in beseeching the divine goodness for ourselves, for the king, for the royal family, for the church, for the high court of parliament, and for all mankind.

Fail not to let the fervency of your prayers be adapted to the variety and magnitude of the things you pray for.

LITANY.

Here the solemn duty of prayer is re-assumed in a different, and, if possible, in a more impressive manner, which includes every thing we ought to ask for ourselves or desire for others. As at the end of every preceding form, assent is given by the congregation by Amen, which signifies So be it : so in the litany, the people are required to answer for themselves accordingly, as Good Lord deliver us from the evil just mentioned, or, We beseech thee to hear us good Lord concerning the blessings recommended to us.

It is to be remarked that the authors of our established form have again contributed, in a

most essential degree, to the relief of our spiritual necessities, by an additional interspersion of prayers and ejaculations throughout, to enliven our attention and to animate our piety. While the minister is, thus, engaged in the discharge of his duty, take heed unto yourselves that ye be not found wanting in your several vocations. The Lord is at hand. Be, during these hallowed moments, careful for nothing, except to continue instant in prayer; meekly kneeling upon your knees, not giving way to any irreverent thoughts, and unbecoming postures, as is too often done by the inconsiderate and prophane: neither speaking aloud nor muttering to the annoyance of others; on the other hand, remember, that coming to Church to adore the common Father of mankind, to do it with such lowly and solemn seriousness, as becometh the children of light, humble creatures speaking to their great Creator with words and thoughts perfectly suitable to the names, and works, duly attributed to God in each.

GENERAL THANKSGIVING.

In the previous service we pray for all things necessary both for ourselves and others. It is, at length, deemed fit to give thanks for all mankind, and to remind us that if the divine goodness has been displayed in any particular instance, either towards any one of us or our country, to notice it properly, as directed, in the proper place.

Above all, let us endeavor to elevate our minds to the utmost height of sound piety, at the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace and for the hope of glory. What greater blessing could enter into the heart of man to conceive? what greater instance of his goodness could a bounteous Providence bestow?

Cease not ever, then, formally and fervently to acknowledge this not only in your hearts; but, by the general tenor of your lives.

CONCLUSION.

We are, lastly, favored with a form different from all the rest, the prayer of St. Chrysostom, addressed directly to Christ himself, comprehending all we have yet desired, or wish for still to make us happy here or hereafter: which ended, the minister closes the daily service with this affectionate benediction:

The Grace, &c.

COMMUNION SERVICE.

After what I have, already, taken upon me to recommend: it will be necessary to add little more than that the same lowliness of mind, the same purity of heart, and the same fervency of devotion are equally required in the present as in the discharge of your previous duty. Permit me, however, giving no offence in any thing, to remind you of an error, into which very many have unintentionally fallen,

which is a want of external reverence, in your corporal deportment, arising, no doubt, from a want of thought, while the minister in God's name, standing, to give the greater effect, pronounces audibly and deliberately the Ten commandments. These, as some amongst you seem to suppose, are not prayers to be repeated, but divine mandates to be heard, in silence, with peculiar diffidence, upon your knees, because, being unstable in all our ways, we are liable to offend continually in every one, and, because, we ought to ask present pardon for the past and grace to help in future.

FINAL BLESSING.

It is, scarcely possible to pronounce this with too much fervour on the one hand, or to hear it with sufficient sincerity, on the other.

O God, who in former ages, hast caused the Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: who, at sundry times, by signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds to our fathers hast condescended to interpose in favor of

thy Church and People. In these latter days hast given an additional instance of thy love towards mankind, by permitting the Book of Common Prayer to be promulgated for their instruction. Grant that we, holding these thy gracious benefits in continual remembrance, when the fullness of time shall come, may be found acceptable in thy sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GOING OUT OF CHURCH.

As soon as the public service is finished, no one should presume, hastily, to quit his place, to say, or to pay the least attention to any thing whatever, until he hath fervently acknowledged, his Creator's goodness for the opportunity just, now, afforded him of enriching his mind with the invaluable treasures of wisdom from above, and seriously implored the Father of Mercies to give him grace, so that his future actions may be regulated by his present professions.

O! gracious Lord! who hast kindly added one more Sabbath unto the days of my life:

who hast favored me with another opportunity of acquiring a more extensive knowledge of thy law : accept, I sincerely pray, of this imperfect tribute of my obedience, and grant that I and all thy people here, may be not only hearers, but doers of the word, for our blessed Redeemer's sake. Amen.

MORNING.

Time and all things being in the hands of God : no man, who entertains the smallest regard either for his temporal or eternal welfare, can seriously and conscientiously pass over the beginning or ending of any one single day, without returning thanks for the past, and imploring a blessing on the future from that great and good Being, whose tender mercies are over all his works ; but, as few or none in the low and laborious walks of life have leisure for long prayer, the following short ejaculations, therefore, are humbly offered to their notice.

O thou, who neither slumberest nor sleepest ! I heartily, thank thee for the blessings

bestowed upon me this night past, and, I earnestly pray thee to enable me to act well throughout the ensuing day: bless my going out and my coming in now, and evermore, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

EVENING.

Having endeavored to the best of your ability to discharge the various duties of the day in that state of life, unto which it hath pleased the good Providence of God to call you: whether in the dependent condition of a servant, or, in the more important station of a master, never fail to call your own ways to remembrance, carefully considering what you have done that you ought not, and what you have not done that you ought to have done, and retiring from the noise of the busy world, conclude the evening with the following prayer.

I am come, O Lord, to the close of this day: I know that I am so much the nearer my latter end. As I, now, go to my bed, I am sure, one day to go to my grave. As Thou hast

led me safely through the dangers and difficulties of the day, so preserve me and my family, O Thou, to whom the darkness and light are both alike, amidst the perils and terrors of the night : let it be thy good pleasure to refresh me with such seasonable rest, that I may rise on the morrow more fit for the duties of my calling : into thy hands I commend my spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

BEFORE MEAT.

God is the author of every good and of every perfect gift. To Him alone is to be attributed the agreeable changes of summer and winter, of day and night, of heat and cold, of light and darkness : He, the general and bountiful parent of us all, maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good. He purifieth the air with his thunders and his lightnings : He bloweth with his wind and the waters flow : He maketh

the grass to grow upon the mountains, and filleth the valleys thereof with the green herb, and with all things conducive to the general happiness of man. Who, then, can be so senseless and so ungrateful to his supreme benefactor, so careless and so unmindful of the wants of his poor fellow-creatures, as not to address the Sovereign giver of all good things, at the beginning and end of every meal, in some such manner as this :

O Lord ! who spreadest our table with all manner of store, make us grateful for these thy blessings, and mindful of the necessities of others, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

AFTER MEAT.

Having, thus, partaken of the divine bounty, let us not, like the Israelites, by our ingratitude, provoke the heavy wrath of God. May neither the hurry of business, nor the love of pleasure, ever, seduce us to omit :

For this favour, O Lord, praised be thy holy name ! Amen.

SACRAMENTS.

As certain rites belonged to the Old Testament, so God Almighty in his wisdom, hath thought fit to annex others, also, to the New, called sacraments. These holy ceremonies serve for bonds of obedience, obligations for the exercise of charity, preservatives from sin, memorials of the benefits we receive from Christ, and, are, moreover, the real conditions required of those, whether rich or poor, who expect the emanations of divine favour. Though God is a Being, whom no man hath seen nor can see, still upon particular occasions, He causeth man, by plain intimations, to notice his existence, as Moses in the burning bush : the Israelites on Sinai, and the people in the days of Elijah : the infirm, by the periodical effect of the waters at Bethesda, and the Apostles by the cloven tongues notifying the effusion of the Holy Spirit, which they, by other means, could not so clearly distinguish. Just so with respect to sacraments. Grace is a consequent derived through them

directly, from God, not as we are apt to imagine from any quality natural or supernatural belonging peculiarly to the ordinances themselves : which are, in fact, no more than religious instruments of salvation, solemn duties of worship containing no internal excellence. Unless, therefore, they are performed just as the great author and finisher of our faith requireth, they are profitable for nothing. On the contrary, if taken, after his precept and example, the consequences, if not immediately, will be, without doubt, ultimately beneficial.

Christ having ordained, in his church, two sacraments only as generally necessary to salvation, which are baptism and the supper of the Lord, these, therefore, I shall briefly consider, in order that you, for whose sake these pages were, in a great measure, purposely written, may not only receive the grace of God, but, receiving it, may receive it not in vain.

BAPTISM.

This is a rite whereby persons are initiated into the profession of Christianity. In the primitive ages it was performed according to the signification of the word, by the entire submersion of the convert. From its original institution by our blessed Lord, unto this day, different modes have been adopted by different nations, wherein, perhaps, the variations of the climate have had full as much influence as the humors of mankind. Without entering into the peculiarities of each, it is sufficient to know that upwards of ten centuries have passed away since the mild manner of sprinkling the forehead of the tender infant with the finger dipt in water has been, generally, pursued in this kingdom, accompanied with this affectionate and striking declaration: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

It being necessary to the common intercourse of society, independent of any religious consideration, that its numerous mem-

bers should be designated by different names, our ancestors, therefore, at the very dawn of christianity, began the practice of naming the child, when it was devoted to Almighty God, which, without any variation in this respect, has been continued regularly down to us, through every succeeding age, and ought to remind us, daily, of a most important circumstance, that on our first entrance into the Christian church, we each of us become through those kind friends, who voluntarily undertake to promise and vow for us, entitled, together with our adventitious name, to certain privileges on condition of discharging certain duties. This solemn engagement so made for us, at a time we were unable to do it for ourselves, we are solemnly bound, immediately after episcopal confirmation, personally, to undertake. To encourage the performance of the latter, the former are first proferred to the notice of the youthful mind. What these privileges, and what these duties, severally, are, and what they distinctly mean, no considerate person can be at a loss to know: because they are plainly set forth in the unrivalled catechism of our church. He that

runs may read. No one, the most illiterate, can mistake their meaning. Any one, "so inclined," cannot but know, that to them, who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, are promised the blessings of eternal life; on the contrary, against them, that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, are denounced indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, on the Jew first, and also upon the Gentile. For with God there is no respect of persons.

The point, then, on which I, here, wish to fix your attention is, that to baptism, a covenant between God and man, voluntary on one side and obligatory on the other, certain privileges are conditionally annexed, to the enjoyment of which no one can have, even, the shadow of a title, one moment longer than He continues to perform the obligations which appertain unto it. Be assured that unless we persevere in such a line of obedient conduct through life, neither hath the divine goodness engaged, nor is it consistent with the holiness of his nature, to bestow such benefits upon us,

nor, indeed, shall we be capable of enjoying them.

May you never lose sight of that supreme goodness, which you see begins, thus, early, to provide for the future happiness of mankind. May you, who are parents, endeavor to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. May you, who are children, honor your father and mother, that it may be well with you. May none of us neglect to do, for ourselves, what was promised in our infant days, and, may we all, in all things, do according to thy word, in full persuasion that if we be not wanting to ourselves, Thou, O Almighty Lord God, who hast begun a good work in us, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ thy son our saviour. Amen.

LORD'S SUPPER.

As by baptism we are admitted into the privileges of the Christian church: so by the supper of the Lord we secure a continuation of them. The latter being, in no respect, less necessary to our individual welfare, though

frequently neglected, than the former, which is generally, adopted, I shall, here, briefly, endeavor to remove a prejudice, which has long continued to deter many well-disposed persons from participating in this hallowed rite. It arises from a small, though in its consequences an important error in translating the New Testament into our native language. What is, here, improperly called damnation, the Apostle styles judgement, temporal only, certainly not relative to everlasting punishment. This appears by his express declaration in the 32d verse of the same chapter, 11 Cor. 1. which decidedly proves that the judgement called by the translators damnation, is of a temporal kind, purposely intended to save instead of consigning the offender to eternal condemnation. Had we not been, here, favored with the authority of St. Paul, the plain dictates of sense unaided by revelation, are sufficient, in this instance, at least, to direct our steps. God in all his dealings with mankind is never extreme to mark what is done amiss. "He acts not by partial but by general laws⁶." "For man it is to err⁷." From fallible creatures infallibility is not to be ex-

pected. Perfection belongeth only to celestial beings. How, then, can any one suppose that the Almighty, in this particular, will deviate from the kind tenor of his providence? Be assured, that, if in your several vocations and capacities, from time to time, you continue to do your best according to what the Gospel generally enjoins, the Holy Spirit will neither leave nor forsake you. Thus guarded, and with a certain prospect of obtaining what is promised to them, who faint not in well doing, be not discouraged by the aforesaid striking error from partaking, at the long accustomed seasons of the year, with your well-disposed neighbours of the communion, before the Altar, and in the presence of God—a communion not with God only, but with one another—a communion, which the compassionate Savior of mankind, on the last solemn evening of his sacred life, instituted for its sake. Aware of what was to happen on the morrow, he sat down, in an upper room, with a chosen few, who, during three years of his public ministry in Judea, had faithfully participated in every vicissitude, and took an affectionate farewell not merely by inviting, but by kindly

enjoining them, Do this in remembrance of me.

The serious reader will do well to remark that this gracious act was, purposely, performed amidst the preparation for impending death. Under what impressions, then, more striking or more proper, after his example, can we, or ought we to consider it, than a preparative against the various sufferings incident to our mortal state, and above all, against each our dying-day, whether likely to be near or distant?

The sentiments to be entertained, then, previous to our approaching the Lord's table, are piety towards God, forgiveness of injuries, and charity to all mankind. It is an act of the purest devotion, implying a lively sense of God's mercy in our redemption by the sacrifice of his Son: the resignation of ourselves and of all our concerns into the hands of that great, and wise, and good Being whom it is our duty, always, to reverence and obey, that omnipotent guardian, in whom we ought to confide.

You see with what impressions, and with what views, it is necessary to approach the

table of our blessed Lord, and how much depends on the right application of the means which he expects us to adopt. Rely not too much on the mercies of God, nor on the merits of his Son, for, not, even, the regular repetition of this most solemn institution can or ought to afford any certain hopes of happiness, unless these very hopes are, hereafter, strengthened by the succeeding course of a godly, righteous, and sober life, unto the end.

Upon the whole, if every circumstance past, present, and future, is properly considered, it will be impossible to imagine whether omnipotence itself could bestow a greater blessing upon mankind.

O bless the Lord and forget not all his benefits, whose good effects will abide for ever, in Heaven, with the faithful followers of his son Jesus Christ. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER.

A form seasonable always, general always, and peculiar always, as every part of it must convince every one, who seriously considers it.

O my Father ! Grant that we may each and all, do so daily unto our lives end through the merits of thy Son, its author and finisher of our Faith. Amen.

CREED.

This is an index comprehending the most striking particulars of religion, which every one, in this our day, is supposed to believe.

Three are used in the English Church.

The Nicene, following the communion, was composed by the council of Nice, in the Minor-Asia, A. D. 325, to counteract the heresy of Arius.

The Athanasian, supposed to have been written long after, either is or ought to be read 13 times every year.

The Apostles', so called, because they have been supposed the authors. Whether it was transmitted down from those holy persons, immediately, to us: whether it was the entire production of any intervening age, or whether it has been altered, in part, from its original formation, we need not be solicitous to

know : since it is, beyond controversy, a very antient composition, and, a most unexceptionable summary of the Christian faith. Ought it not, then, to be, often, repeated : repeated, indeed, with that seriousness, as though each time was to be the last ? Every part relating to this material branch of divine service being so frequently explained in sermons and so diffusely treated in a variety of books, it may, I trust and hope it will, by God's grace, suffice to quote the words of Father Chrysostom, and to close with those of St. Paul, "continually, therefore, revolving and recounting these things, let us purify our life and make it bright."

May the God of peace sanctify you wholly : and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

These were delivered by the Creator of the world to Moses from the top of Sinai on two tables of stone : four on the former enforcing

the Duty of Man to God : six on the latter, containing our obligations to one another, which, like the Creed, being fully detailed in a variety of tracts and sermons, it would be superfluous, here, to descend to particular explanations, also. To pass, however, a subject of such individual importance without some general remarks, on the other hand, would be equally improper. To comprehend their full extent, it is requisite to observe, that as the one is an epitome of the Christian's faith, so the other are clearly meant for a compendium of their duty, who, in these last days, are, as the Jews at the original promulgation, the Israel of God : that a great deal more is implied under each separate head than is directly expressed : that there is, in fact, not one titlle of the moral law, but what flows from this holy fountain : that had the Almighty thought fit to increase them, had they been more diffusely or more concisely expressed, many would have wanted inclination to read, others capacity to comprehend them : that if their number had been less, or the sense compressed into a narrower space, few in comparison of the great body of mankind could have

understood them : that to the young and inconsiderate part of the community the tendency of the divine precepts may seem, perhaps, at first sight, inadequate to the purpose for which they were distinctly intended, and to be pointed, as it were, at ten crimes only, instead of every defect in human conduct. This objection, under which a “countless multitude” of transgressors are too prone to shelter, will cease in considering that under each separate mandate, every inferior crime, every minor offence, and every little foible of a similar kind is collaterally forbidden, while the opposite duty, with its corresponding virtue, is strictly enjoined : that if we are commanded to abstain from any thing, we ought to rest assured it is detrimental to our nature, and therefore the divine law-giver expects us cautiously to avoid every avenue and every temptation leading to the perpetration thereof : that all we are bound to do ourselves, we are also bound to persuade others to do likewise, and all we are bound not to do, we are equally bound to dehort others from doing.

to dissuade

I.

Though we do not believe the existence of a plurality of Gods, still, if excessive avarice, if inordinate ambition, if an immoderate love of pleasure, or if any one bad passion so far takes possession of our heart, as to seclude a proper sense of the Almighty : are we, in all these cases, more than hearers of the word? One Being, perfect in every perfection, is sufficient to create and govern all things in Heaven and earth. It is wicked to think of more. Justly are we commanded to have one God only : that is to endeavor to deport ourselves in a manner becoming the purity of the divine nature, and as far as in us lieth suitably to the infirmity of the human.

II.

These words fully express the earnest purpose of the Almighty to preserve his chosen from the idolatrous corruptions, to which the Egyptians, among whom they were in bondage, were addicted.

May their example, which is set forth to warn, never cease to warn us, lest, by worshipping a molten image we turn the glory of God into the similitude of any figure, and become in time, after the transgression of our forefathers, in all things too superstitious.

III.

To take the name of the Lord thy God in vain is not merely to use it in frivolous conversation, and immoral discourse: but, the prohibition strikes at a much darker shade of sin—the asseveration of a falsehood. When any one presumes to do this in the deliberate process of an oath: it, then, rises into an enormous crime, indeed. With such, no one's life: no one's character: no one's property, is safe. Justly are they abhorred in this world. Not being held guiltless in the divine eye, they will, most, assuredly, without a timely repentance, be punished in the next. So they, who speak the truth in Christ and lie not, are encouraged, by a variety of passages in scripture, to expect a sure reward, though

I know not whether it is displayed any where more satisfactorily, than in the animated language of the 15th Psalm.

Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle ? or who shall rest upon thy holy hill ? he that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth from his heart.

IV.

A brother, or sister, or any other relative not specially enumerated among those enjoined to do no manner of work, on the Sabbath Day, may, inconsiderately, presume, on this account, at first sight to claim exemption from this salutary mandate. Can any one possessed of a reasonable soul, the least conversant in Scripture, seriously observe the strict manner in which the day is protected, as well as the good reasons assigned for such protection, and yet hesitate one moment to believe that all men of every age and degree are not equally and firmly bound not only not to trespass, in the least, on its sacred hours, by unnecessary acts of business or pleasure, but, to keep

them holy, and to honour in common their common Maker?

V.

Long life in the delightful country of Canaan was considered by the Israelites as the source of temporal prosperity. Under the same striking figure we Christians, also, are taught to expect every kind of blessing, the converse of which is, almost sure, sooner or later, in some shape or other, to overtake filial disobedience, even, in this world.

VI.

Few, or none, are so ignorant as not to see the full force of this necessary precept, or so unfeeling as not to shudder at the very thought of the dreadful crime it tends to prevent, without sufficiently considering, that while it commands them not to deprive one another of life, the source of every thing valuable to man, it indirectly forbids all personal injuries either to

the mind or body, which may tend to render the period of our being less tolerable, or to shorten its duration.

VII.

The unhappy consequences, which generally ensue from adultery are too manifestly injurious to the dearest interests of society to need any further comment, than that every sin of a similar tendency is indirectly forbidden here.

VIII.

The protection of individual property is so highly essential to the general welfare, that dishonesty, in every shape, is either discountenanced or punished in the world which now is, and, unless he that stole takes care to steal no more, will be remembered in that which is to come. Under these strong prohibitory words, Thou shalt not steal, a variety of bad actions rising one above another high in guilt, springing from the same impure source, and

ultimately amounting to much the same thing, are forbidden also : as, unfair dealing in trade, over-reaching conduct in business, or, deceitful schemes in rational pleasure, too numerous to recite and too obvious to require it.

IX.

The crime, against which these words are particularly pointed, is false testimony upon oath before a magistrate or in a court of justice, which may be done in diverse ways : as, pretending to know more or less than we really do : artfully endeavoring to lessen the weight of what is likely to operate against us, and designedly magnifying every circumstance in our favor : asserting or denying with greater positiveness than is authorised by the plain state of the case. This mandate seems to have been issued to protect the preceding four : for whose life, whose happiness, or whose property, would be safe, if left exposed to the licentious injuries of an unbridled tongue ? It is not limited to the above sin alone ; but, it strikes at

the very root of every untrue and defamatory report, purposely propagated to the prejudice of others.

X.

To desire a comfortable portion of the good things intended for us by the kind author of our being, is natural and right. To wish for more than we, already, have, may be, in a great variety of cases, so far from sin, that to endeavor to improve our lot by a steady course of virtuous industry, is a duty highly incumbent upon all such, whose state in life admits it. All desires, then, are not indiscriminately forbidden; but, such, and such only, as have an intemperate tendency, which was the case of Ahab with respect to Naboth's vineyard. For a subject to sell his patrimonial property was contrary to the Jewish law. The possession, therefore, of the coveted object would have ill become the dignity of the king. On that account, the desire was displeasing in the eye of the Almighty. From hence we may draw this inference, upon which, I trust, we may confidently rest, viz.

*Axiom. A proposition evident
at first sight.*

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

63

Whenever we set our minds on what cannot fairly be obtained, we are said to covet. We break the last commandment, which seems intended by its divine author for the protection of the preceding nine. Our conduct can never be correct until the source from whence it springs is pure, also : and as our blessed Lord hath assured us that none but the pure in heart should see God : may I, and you, and all, and each of us never cease to say in the holy language of our Church, Lord have mercy upon us and write all these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.

GOVERNMENT OF THE MIND.

Before we can expect to act rightly, we must learn to think justly, — is an axiom, which, I trust, no one will dispute. Were any one to ask what the body and mind are, the answer would be — the former, though differently organized from that of other creatures : though consisting of different degrees of organization in itself, differs neither primarily nor ultimately from common terrestrial matter — the

latter is an immaterial something, which denotes an accountable and rational being. It is to the soul, like time to eternity, immediately present with us. Its powers are two-fold, partly active and partly passive.

Active in the ability to select from the infinitude of objects, within its reach, such and such only : to relinquish them, and, with promptness to fix upon others.

Passive, when so oppressed by any heavy load of evil, elevated with unexpected good, or through slothful and vicious habits so riveted to some pleasing or painful particular, as not, without a considerable degree of laudable exertion, to be able to recover its activity, to turn and amuse itself with others. Absolute perfection, and uninterrupted delight, are not the present lot of man. It is much the same with our corporal as with our mental concern. If each have their troubles and diseases : for each a careful Providence has provided comforts, and antidotes : medicine to heal all manner of sickness of the body : religion, if not, always, to cure, at least, certainly sufficient to alleviate the diverse infirmities of the mind. From a stupid ignorance of ourselves, as well

as from failing in the necessary duty of consideration, it comes to pass, that we see so many individuals lost, in the very prime of life, to the dearest interest of society, wretched within their own breasts, and, consequently, unworthy in the divine eye. The mind and the hand are each, if not equally, certainly very much under the governance of their respective agents, whose duty as well as interest it is to apply them both to the useful and honorable affairs of life. We may not, perhaps, in this respect, always, be able to stand upright ; still, by the sincerity of our endeavors, and by the fervency of our prayers for divine assistance therein, much more may be effected towards the right government of our thoughts than we are, at first, aware of. Let any one, inclined to doubt this, consider — whether, at the dawn of every returning day, he is not, at liberty, and, whether he does not use that liberty in devoting his mental and corporeal faculties to virtuous industry or to disgraceful idleness, to dissipation or to business, to sobriety or to intemperance — if he has a power to do it one day, he is able to do it another. For the self-same reason, the possibility of

continuing in the same line of conduct for a week, for a month, for a year, or, "in few," for any reasonably indefinite length of time may be admitted also. So, at length, what, at first, was, in either case, a difficult and unpleasant undertaking, becomes in process of time, an easy and familiar habit. It must not, however, be denied that events, which no degree of prudence can foresee or avert, are in every period, continually, turning up, at one time from the treachery of friends, at another, from the malevolence of enemies sufficient to baffle the shrewdest judgment and to ruffle the sweetest temper : that, in a course of years, too, occurrences of a providential nature, from the loss of our dearest relatives, as well as from the unexpected interposition of the divine arm, are sure to fall out, calculated to shake the strongest resolution, and to overcast the brightest mind.

Upon occasions of this serious cast, wise and good Christians never sit still, in useless silence, "to wail their loss," but, resigning themselves to the will of Heaven, "cheerly seek how to redress their harms, for what cannot be avoided, it is childish to lament or fear."

Almighty Lord, who dost put into our minds good desires, grant that by thy special grace preventing us, we may bring the same to good effect, and shew it in the beauty of holiness throughout the whole course of our lives, through Jesus Christ our Savior, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

PRAYER.

Such is the act of addressing the Supreme Being, through the merits of our Savior, by a modification of words and demeanor, accompanied by a disposition of mind suitable to the purity of the divine nature and to the infirmity of the human. Whether this holy custom was at first suggested by the natural sense of man, or whether it was derived from God's revelations to the patriarchs, it is not material to ascertain : as it is, now, indisputably sanctioned by no less authority than that of Christ himself, whose piety was as eminent as all his other virtues. The general use of it, indeed, in every age, by nations civilized and

barbarous, intimates, at least, that it must be derived from some good cause, and is a strong argument in its behalf. It is, generally, sanctioned throughout the voluminous pages of the Old Testament, and enjoined continually in the salutary doctrines of the New.

It is of two kinds,

public

and

private.

The former includes all conditions of men, distinguishing none, but, being necessarily conducted in general terms, does not alone expand to the case of every individual, always, any more than to the same individual, at different times, who, if a wise and good man, will have recourse to the latter, according to his wants and wishes, to his merits or imperfections. The solemn end of both modes of worship is the same — namely — to cherish such sentiments as may induce us to honor God's holy name and to serve him truly all the days of our life. A real devout frame of mind is to be acquired by habitual devotion, not by formal acts or incidental flights. The cold formality of one day's attendance in the church

will plead but little in excuse for forgetfulness of God during every other. It is difficult to lay aside those cares, entirely, at once, on the sabbath, which have monopolized our thoughts at all other times. Public devotion aims at the good of ourselves and others. What duty is there more gratifying to the senses? What can be more satisfactory to the heart of every friend of social order, than at the weekly appointed hour unitedly endeavoring to improve ourselves by joyfully conspiring in the same pious deed, publicly professing the same lively faith, openly declaring the same hope, through the same Savior, in the same God, thus audibly exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see each the last day approaching. Very little discernment is enough to convince any considerate person that the general body of the people would be in utter danger of losing their religious sentiments, were they debarred from regular opportunities of assembling together, as the manner of some is, and of being influenced by the presence of one another. Every sincere Christian is desirous to maintain a daily intercourse with his Maker, privately

at home: more, however, is required. It indispensably becomes him to give public testimony every week, at least, of his obedience, before his neighbors, in the Church. For these, two reasons, more cogent than others, may be assigned :

1. Our Redeemer commands it.

2. Such pious acts conduce to the mutual edification of ourselves and others.

Religion never did, never can, and never will exist without some established meeting of the people. Cretes and Arabians, Jews and Proselytes, had certain times to sacrifice and pray after their manner. By the special command of the Most High, under the Mosaic law, a regular period was set apart from the creation to the death of Christ. The same custom, with a change only of the day, has, always, prevailed among Christians until now.

The latter relates, directly, to every one's individual self attending continually upon these very things — to keep the body in temperance and the mind in godliness. The attentive reader cannot avoid noticing that our blessed Lord, in cautioning his disciples against the abuse of private prayer, not only

supposes, but recommends, at the same time, the proper use of it. Every member of society is distinguishable from the rest by his particular share in the divine dispensations. His wants and his comforts are his own, though others feel the like. His sins too are his own, though others are guilty of the like. In short, this sacred duty of prayer has a general tendency to improve our wisdom, to increase our virtue, and to strengthen our resolution. While it prepares us for the duties of the present, it qualifies us for the glories of a future life.

Whoever ventures into the world without this holy guard, may be compared to him, that rusheth unarmed into battle, liable to contend with he knows not what, and to manage what he meets he knows not how: disposed to startle at every object, to be goaded in every encounter, and to be slain in every battle.

Be assured, then, that the way to be happy is to be good, and the way to keep so is to seek the Lord while he may be found, by such means, as he hath graciously appointed, which are by private as well as by public

L. prayer, whose effects “console us during the darkness of the night, and cheer us through the business of the day, continue with us at home, accompany us abroad¹⁰,” and will abide with the faithful for ever.

O Thou, who knowest our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking, let thy merciful ears, gracious Lord, be open to the prayers of thy humble servants, and, that they may obtain their petitions, make them to ask such things as shall be pleasing in thy sight, through our mediator, thy son Jesus Christ, who hath promised to be in the midst of those gathered together in his name. Amen.

SUNDAY.

Be it known to the young and inexperienced that our early ancestors had their sacred temple and stated day to worship the sun. From hence is evidently derived the name, which surely is a severe reflection upon all such of modern times, who enjoying the blessed privileges of Christianity, absent them-

selves from places of public worship on this day.

Christians, above all nations, have two the best reasons that can, possibly, be assigned, independent of their own interest, to keep it holy.

1. The divine commandment, because the Lord rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made. This, in the Hebrew, is sabbath: in English, rest.

2. The commemoration of an event no less extraordinary and important, the resurrection of our Blessed Lord, and therefore, styled the Lord's Day. The former is still observed, by the Jews, on saturday the last: while Christians commemorate both on sunday, the first day of the week.

The wisdom and goodness of God are in no respect more striking than in this sacred and useful institution; but, as we are seldom sensible of the real value of blessings till we feel the privation, let us represent to our minds the wretched state, in which this country would soon be involved, if the day, now, set apart, throughout the whole civilized world for religious rest, was, ever, to be totally

done away. Of this, some tolerable conjecture may be formed by only casting an eye into those barbarous regions, where this salutary custom is, yet, unknown. It is, however, unnecessary to ramble far from home, when the precincts of almost every parish will furnish us with examples sufficient to corroborate our opinion on the imperious necessity of keeping the sabbath. What sort of people they, for the most part, are, who make no distinction between this day and the other six, it is no more necessary to remark, than to ask whether any well-disposed man would choose to dwell in a town, if all his neighbors were to turn, after the lawless example of the lawless few, rebels against God and the king. Would his person, would his property, would his character be safe amid such a combination? On the contrary, how very different is a Sunday-scene under the prudent regulation of a serious academic clergyman. All worldly pursuits, except such as are, merely, necessary for the common comfort of animal life, during these solemn returning weekly hours, are, entirely, suspended: shops are shut: public houses, except for the fainting traveller

and needy labourer, not open : pleasure, incompatible with devotion, avoided : here, at the joyful sound of the bell, you see all dressed in their best apparel assembling with the bible, the sacred emblem of religion, under their arms, at the door, with their families, cheerfully repairing to church, then and there, with one heart and voice, letting their light shine before one another in common adoration of their common adorable Creator.

Independently of the fourth commandment, independently of the blessings, in store for those, who celebrate, independently of the evil, which is sure, sooner, or later, to fall upon the head of such as profane the sabbath, what greater consolation can there be to the heart of every well-disposed man than to reflect that, at the very time he is performing his weekly duty, in the church, whether it is from 10 to 12 in the forenoon, or from 2 to 4 in the afternoon, millions in every country, in the Christian world, are engaged, in similar places, in similar acts of praise, and thanksgiving to the Sovereign of the universe?

Blessed Lord ! whose goodness is not limited to a few, but, is, providentially, ex-

tended over all, rich and poor, in no instance is it more conspicuously manifest than in thy merciful institution of the sabbath day, at intervals sufficient to keep alive, in our hearts, thy constant love towards mankind, and to recruit the failing strength of the laboring part of thy creation. May a due sense of such inestimable benefits excite me, ever more and more, to keep it in a manner becoming my dependent state. If at any time I do "warp" from the peculiar duty of this "all-hallowed day," either through the inadvertence of youth, or through the increasing anxiety of creeping age, remember me, O my God, concerning this, also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercies. Amen.

TIME.

If we confine our thoughts to the human race only, time may be considered as beginning at the creation. It is a mode of duration, which we, for convenience, distinguish by certain periodical measures marked out by the heavenly bodies, chiefly by the sun and

moon. These are, again, rendered still more familiar by the artificial modes of clocks, watches, and sun-dials. Hence arises the idea of particular periods, as a year, month, day, &c. These, which are ever running after each other from our nativity to our death, aggregately taken, constitute our lives. Nothing, surely, is of greater importance, and, yet, of nothing, surely, are we more careless than of the proper application of this sacred talent, intended partly for the concerns of this world, partly for those of the next, and committed to our care by the great author of our being, to whom we are no less responsible than for the improvement of any other gift. The past is irrevocably gone. The future may never come. Of the present only we are sure. Of itself, time is incapable of variation. Still by good, or bad management, it admits of different degrees of increase or diminution. It is brightened by industry, redeemed by care, improved by sobriety, and increased by a regular plan of virtuous transactions. On the contrary, it is disgraced by intemperance, wasted by idleness, injured by vice, lost in protracted sleep, and with regard to our own

existence, is, always, precarious. Such, then, being the nature of time, knowing what a variety of duties belong to each particular period: conscious that God expects an account of the management thereof, it highly concerns me to reflect whether I use it properly, or abuse it wrongfully. To ascertain this, let me consider whether I am in habits of taking more sleep than is necessary against the fatigues of the approaching day, or am I, after the grateful repose of night, when “the golden sun” is up, and all nature invites to industry, like Solomon’s sluggard inclined for a little folding of the hands? Thus, am I not, during the course of the day, through deliberate slothfulness in the morning, compelled to leave undone what I ought to do — my duty in that state of life, unto which it hath pleased God to call me? If at Church? how do I deport myself in the immediate presence of that kind Being, who is the giver of all I possess? If at table? do I esteem food as the support of my weakness, or do I view it with a luxurious eye, and, spend more time at my stated meals, than is required to refit me for those labors, whereunto I am daily

called? Or, on the contrary, am I so lost in the indulgence of my misguided appetites, as to forget the source from whence all blessings flow? Am I not inclined, in direct opposition to the precepts of my blessed Redeemer, to take too much thought for my life what I shall eat, and, for my body, what I shall put on, and, instead of devoting no more time than is commonly necessary for each frugal repast, do I not loiter much away in excess? Though I may not waste entire days in unbroken idleness: am I careful not to let pass by unprofitably all those little fragments in weeks, and days, and hours, and bits of hours, which altogether constitute a considerable part of human life, and which, if properly attended to, might be turned to vast advantage both in our spiritual and temporal warfare? As various pleasures were intended by our indulgent Creator to ease the burden of life, but, not to relieve it entirely of its cares, am I cautious to take them sparingly without injury to myself or to those about me? How do I behave myself at our annual feast? Do I set off by joining my well-disposed neighbors on sunday, at church, then and there addressing God in a

manner suitable to the chearful occasion? Do I spend one or two days in social intercourse with my friends, or do I waste a whole valuable week in chambering festivity, at a season of the year, when my labors are most wanted in the field, and when I might, like the provident ant, be laying up in store for my family in winter?

O eternal God! who seeth all things from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof, pardon me, I beseech thee of thy goodness, for the various periods I have either inconsiderately mispent or entirely lost! Teach me so to number the past that I may zealously apply the future unto wisdom: encourage me to catch the fleeting moments as they arise! Awaken me to discharge the duties of my station, each, in their proper place: and, as the expectation of the approaching morn renders the "eyeless waste of night" more tolerable: so may the animating hope of futurity stimulate me ever more and more to bear with patience the evils of the present, which vanish before the number of thy daily blessings, and are nothing in comparison of the glory hereafter to be revealed

in us through our mediator and advocate Jesus Christ. Amen.

INDUSTRY.

If thou art inclined, by evil communication, or by domestic habits, to idleness, arise, O sleeper ! Consider the superior state, to which the active providence of God hath called thee over this animated scene ! Look up to the clear fountain of perfection proffered thee in the Gospel. There you have the brightest example and the purest precepts to excite you to an industrious course. Whether you trace your blessed Savior into retirement, or behold him in the discharge of the public duties of his mission, you find him, always, employed in doing good. Distress, in every form, attracted his particular care. None were too high, none too low for his compassion. The gates of Naim, the pool of Bethesda, and the city of Capernaum, are marked by deeds never to be forgotten. Fainting multitudes were fed, winds were hushed, seas were calmed, tombs were opened,

the dead were raised in obedience to his commands. If, for one moment, you turn your eye from the author and finisher of your faith, you, immediately, perceive his Apostles vigilantly ¹² employed in the reformation of a deluded race. Nor are the sacred books of the Old Testament without examples to the like effect. Were not the active efforts of Moses ¹³ and Joshua ¹⁴ more beneficial to the Israelites than the mild though certainly less virtuous reigns of king Asa ¹⁵ and Josiah ¹⁶? If from these patterns of holiness, you will descend to examine some of the most venerable characters among the sons of men, such as either the fair pages of history illuminate, or come within the sphere of your own personal knowledge, you will have further reasons for admitting that no man, however high, or however humble his degree, was ever sent into this world to stand all the day idle. What is so clear from the œconomy of our holy religion, is confirmed by the system of universal nature, as well as by the artificial institutions of society. Does not every part of the creation excite us to activity? The sun ¹⁷, though stationary, revolves. The planets ¹⁸ have each their periodic

times. Day and night repeat their course. Year rolleth after year. Vapors arise ¹⁹. Rains descend, which supply the current stream for the use of man and beast, while water putrifies in the quiescent pool, and sends noxious vapors into the air, filling the surrounding medium with disease and death. The superficies ²⁰ of the earth, and the ambient air ²¹, together with every species of inanimate matter, are additional incitements to activity. Of Nature's works nothing stops. Operations, in number, as the sand, under the agency of a superintending Providence, are, always, going on. The silent manners of the brute creation teach the like lesson, and the life of man speaks the like language. Does not every organ of the body, from the eye to the foot, conduce to a similar end, with which the faculties of the mind one and all correspond? By the necessities of our nature, we are called forth to different employments. The good effects of industry are visible every where throughout the country, in the beauty of our towns, in the variety of our manufactures, in the improving verdure of our fields, in the extent of our commerce furling its sail

in every sea, in the grandeur of our fleets, in the array of our armies, in the form of our government, in the splendor of the great, in the comfort of the poor, and what is more, in the general peace of every good man's heart.

The more we investigate, the sooner we shall be convinced that various active duties are imperiously required of every Christian: that trifling and idleness are nearly related to vice, and are inconsistent with health of body and peace of mind.

He, therefore, that will be saved must thus think and act: O Almighty God! king of all kings and governor of all things! who, by thy incomprehensible power in the beginning created the heaven and the earth: by thy never-failing providence dost cause the various functions of nature to be continually fulfilled, and by thy bountiful goodness providest for the daily wants of mankind, from the king upon the throne to the captive in the dungeon: for the inhabitants of the great deep: for every living creature that moveth upon the earth, as well as for the insect, wafted through the air "by the invisible and creeping wind," and for the fowl that fly above in the open firma-

ment of Heaven, incline me, invested as I am, with supreme dominion over all things here below, cheerfully, to discharge the important duties of my station. Thou, O gracious Lord, hast been far more bountiful to man, than to any other creature thou hast made : him hast Thou possessed with a superiority ²² of form, and alone enabled to inhabit every climate of the earth : to him hast Thou given an immortal soul ²³, capable of divine honor : him hast Thou invested with the wonderful faculty of speech ²⁴, with ability to discern, and with reason to distinguish right from wrong ; but, on me hast Thou bestowed an additional instance of thy favor, in permitting me to dwell in these free ²⁵ and temperate regions of the world. With so fair an opportunity of advancing thy glory, of promoting the public good, and of improving my own nature, thus endowed, shall my “quick mind lie still, and bring forth weeds?” O forbid it Lord ! blessed with health, and in the bright meridian of life, shall I remain an idle and unworthy being, a useless blank amongst the works of thy hands ? Amidst the ease and pleasure, which I enjoy at home, let me

recollect how many of my fellow-creatures, equally deserving, are perishing abroad with fatigue and want²⁶! How many for the gratification of my vanity are dragging on a miserable existence in the gloomy mine²⁷, when I am permitted to enjoy the cheerful light of each returning day! How many for the protection of that government, which protects me, pass their time on the trackless deep²⁸, or guard the frontiers of the empire in distant garrisons over lonely regions²⁹ “where shivering cold and hunger pine the clime,” while Thou, O merciful Creator, has blessed me with the free exercise of various spiritual and temporal blessings. May I freely reflect, and so reflect as to amend the error of my inactive ways “ere I decline into the vale of years.” May I gratefully call to mind “ere I feel the painful pressure of increasing age,” what a life of labor my blessed Savior endured for my sake! In journeyings, in painfulness, in watchings often, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the city! May I use³⁰ every endeavor to yield the fruits of those useful talents, which, for wise ends, Thou hast so kindly committed to my care. May I, before I pay

the last solemn debt of nature, by uniform diligence, so stir myself in this busy world, as to reap, in due time, the kindly fruits of the earth, and to obtain the glorious rewards promised through my Redeemer's merits to those, who, diligently, live after thy commandments, in the next. Amen.

CONTENTMENT.

Positive commands are given in the Old and salutary duties enjoined in the New Testament, to make us good. By reason of the imperfection of terrestrial enjoyments, as well as the utter impossibility of every one being able to obtain them; our blessed Lord hath, kindly, enforced the necessity of contentment, both by precept and example, to supply whatever is defective in our lot. Without it no degree of prosperity can be enjoyed, nor can any grade of adversity be endured. To curb, and, if possible, to divert the wretchedness of a discontented mind, every one should seriously observe that "Heaven, for wise reasons, hath divided the state of man into diverse

functions :” that human life was neither intended to be brightened by uninterrupted sun-shine, nor to be overcast with perpetual gloom, and that equality is not the genius of this world. Pre-eminence and inferiority : dominion and subjection : are, each, in their proper places, indispensably necessary. The rich could not enjoy the honors of advancement without the daily labors of the poor : nor could the poor eat the bread of carefulness unless aided by the daily bounty of the rich. The different classes, together with the numberless diversities in each, execute a benevolent plan of divine providence : and, are necessary to the well-being of Society : which, like a great chain, whose links, however distant, depend upon each other, exists by the preservation of its respective parts. No man is : no man can : no man ought to be perfectly independent. The great are, in fact, no other than superior servants in the vast family of the world : who are required to do justly, to love mercy, and to deal bread to the hungry in due season : so they, whom God for wise reasons hath consigned to humble stations, are required to behave themselves lowly and reve-

rently to all their betters. If, then, in the general arrangement, the supreme disposer of all events has actually consulted the interest of the whole human race, it follows, that the condition of each individual, independent of such alterations as his own good or bad conduct might have made, is what God deemed convenient, and ought, certainly, to be submitted to without a murmur, always, remembering that "whatever is grievous to be borne, becomes easier by contentment³¹."

Toward the attainment of so happy a frame of mind, fail not frequently to reflect on the state of life unto which it hath pleased God to call you! Elevated by the bounty of providence, without any merits of your own: born to honor, heir to a stately mansion, descended from a venerable line of ancestry: and surrounded by vast domains, how! consider how, you, generally deport yourself in so responsible a station over your numerous dependants and towards the circumjacent neighborhood? Imperious and unfeeling, or easy of access, and kind to all? As example is far before precept, do you present a conspicuous object of imitation, or are you addicted to excess, to

prophane talking, and to the neglect of the sabbath of the Lord thy God? Are you content with your hereditary blessings, or like the disconsolate king of Israel, do you foolishly covet some corner³², which it is impossible, fairly, to obtain, and, if you could get possession of it, would not increase your happiness? Are the unexpected variations in the weather apt to ruffle you, because they impede the best concerted plans for business, and spoil the finest schemes for pleasure? Forget not “what will come will come:” “the self-same Heaven that frowns on you, looks sadly upon all³³.” Are you, by your own voluntary choice, in the ministry of the Christian religion? Consider the high importance of your trust, and endeavor to conduct yourself in such a manner as may enable you to give an account chearful to yourself and satisfactory in that eye which runneth to and fro throughout the whole earth to shew himself strong in behalf of them, whose heart is perfect towards him. If young, or not yet beneficed in the church, be not too impatient for advancement. The day of trial may not be over, nor the time of retribution far off. Endure unto the end, Your merito-

rious labors will certainly be rewarded in self satisfaction, now, and in happiness, hereafter. Perhaps, too, it may please the great Lord of the vineyard, who ruleth the hearts of all men, so graciously to dispose that of some discerning patron, as to reward thy merits according to thy moderate and just desires. When troubles assail: difficulties arise and pains attack you, yield to none, but call forth all your courage: forget not that your holy Redeemer was contented to be betrayed. Forget not to look back on those many years of health and happiness, which your benevolent Creator has, previously, permitted you to enjoy, from your birth to this very hour. Forget not that it is good for us to be afflicted, and that man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards. Forget not that many modes of comfort, if not some source of address not attainable by the generality of your fellows are, still, within your reach! Whenever you enumerate your wants, omit not to put your blessings in the opposite scale, and you will quickly know which will preponderate. If you have lost a friend, have you not a Savior? Fail not, then, to acknowledge the hand of

God in every event of life. Whether you receive good or evil, receive it as from a hand which has a right to dispense what it pleaseth. Receive its blessings with thankfulness and its inflictions without murmuring. On the other hand, “are you lowly born?” Is it your lot to serve and depend on others? What is your particular vocation? Employed in putting the sickle to the corn, in thrashing, or in grinding, or in any other useful operation to prepare it for the use of man: do you conduct yourself in this state of temptation, contentedly and honestly: or do you pilfer from your master³⁴, day by day, continually murmuring against the good man of the house, because he does not raise you to some higher post, while many of your neighbors unable to get employment within, are compelled to work out of doors under the rigor of winter? Does your life pass away on the trackless deep, or under perilous tents, watching and fighting the enemies of your Country? Whether in promoting the commercial interest, or in serving the military government, be content in reflecting that so long as you continue to arm yourself with patience and to conduct yourself

with courage, the Lord of Hosts will never forsake you³⁵, but, after this painful life ended, will receive you into “a new kingdom, where you will reap a harvest of perpetual rest.”

O Thou, who hast surrounded us with troubles we are prone to complain of, yet, cannot redress: exposed us to perils we, always, dread, yet, cannot escape: oppressed us with wants we are impatient, yet unable to supply; but, for our direction, therein, hast mercifully favored us with the comfort of thy holy word, and blessed us with a perfect model of contentment in thy son Jesus Christ. Grant, therefore, “O just and true disposing God,” that we may learn of him, who was meek and lowly of heart, to be content each in our several vocations with such a portion of good things as thou art pleased to bestow: and to submit so patiently to the various dispensations of thy daily providence here, that we finally lose not, through his merit, the inconceivable glories intended for us hereafter. Amen.

CHARACTER.

If it is allowable to compare things ³⁶ diverse with each other, one should be inclined to say, the character of man carries no unapt similitude to the terrestrial globe. Both are the original works of a wise and omnipotent Creator: both are composed of a variety of parts, and both require different degrees of culture and management to nourish and improve them. As distant climates present soils, of different qualities, which differ, also, from each other, so does society, in general, offer to the eye of the discerning characters infinitely diversified. Sometimes the good and bad traits are so predominant, or so intermixed, as clearly to discriminate one person from a virtuous, and a second from a vicious man. At another, these qualities are so blended, like light and shade in nature, as to leave the character doubtful: virtue and vice so crossing and running upon each other, that it is difficult to distinguish where one begins and the other ends, where to

praise and where to blame. In short, characters, for the most part, are distinguished into three kinds, good, bad, and indifferent. Which to admire, and which to blame, no one will hesitate. What they are, and what they ought to be, the most illiterate cannot be ignorant. How to estimate them impartially and justly, is not so easy; but as such attentions, if properly made, will be found useful in our intercourse with the world: the following remarks, I trust, will not be beneath the notice of the serious reader.

Few, it is to be observed, have the inclination and opportunity both to plan and execute any design either eminently good, or terribly atrocious. None, indeed, there are, who are not liable to frequent failings, incident to continual errors, exposed to daily trespasses, and, many in habits of actual sin. One man, possessed of all the essentials requisite to entitle him to the highest degree of military fame, undaunted courage, consummate skill, and unceasing vigilance, may never be favored with an opportunity to display these great qualities in action. While another, with not half the merit, by a chain of fortuitous

events, is placed in a situation, which, in the course of only one single day, or of a few hours, enables him to attract the notice of his countrymen, and to hand down his name to a distant posterity³⁷. A third, not daring, perhaps, through fear of punishment, or actuated by some other motive, to commit any flagrant act of impiety, notwithstanding, by continually persevering in a line of indifferent conduct: at the close of life, collectively speaking, may have done as much real harm, by the dangerous fallacy of his precepts, and by the pernicious tendency of his example, as if he had casually perpetrated one single enormity, instead of persevering in habits more regular and less excessively sinful. Hence it follows, that the real character of every human being, whether good or bad, ought to be estimated, and, be assured, it will be estimated, by the general tenor of his actions from the beginning to the end of his rational life: as the fineness of the year, not by the beauty of one season, by the glare of one day, or by the brightness of one month; but, by the geniality of the whole.

Let no one, then, presume to think he is not as other men are : and, arrogate merit, to which he is not, in the least, entitled, because he has abstained from sins, which he was never tempted to commit : let us all thank God for exempting us from temptation in some instances, and earnestly pray for grace to resist in others, to which the sovereign disposer of all events may see fit to expose us, during this present life, in order that, by a course of virtuous conduct we may work out our own salvation, and thereby render ourselves worthy objects of his favor in the next.

O merciful father ! who in compassion to our fallen nature, hast favored us with an example of perfect righteousness : enable us, in all our trials and adversities, to follow the blessed steps of that most holy life, which was sacrificed for our sake, and not, like the presuming Pharisee, to believe ourselves blameless in every ordinance, because we have walked after thy commandments in some particulars, through the merits of Jesus Christ thy son our Lord. Amen.

REGULATIONS

FOR

A SUNDAY SCHOOL.

The children of the village being assembled at the usual time, and silence obtained, let the following prayer be said by the minister, to whose custody they are committed, falling devoutly on their knees.

BEGINNING.

Omnipotent and immortal God ! creator of all things in heaven and earth : whose throne is glory : whose sceptre righteousness : whose overflowing goodness is most eminently conspicuous as well over the poorest and weakest of thy creatures, as in protecting the richest and the most stately monuments of thy favor : “who seest the hero perish and the sparrow fall ³⁸.” We beseech thee to extend thy wonted goodness over all the members of thy church : give to the clergy, in general, a spirit of holiness : possess them not with fear ³⁹ : but, ena-

ble them, boldly, to rebuke vice, to the maintenance of thy true religion and virtue : upon these occasions, more especially I pray thee to make me patient and industrious in declaring thy will, not merely to the inhabitants of this parish assembled at the usual hour in the church ; but, O Thou, that knowest the secrets of all hearts and turnest them as it seemest best to thy supreme wisdom, turn mine o a temper truly charitable towards these little ones, whom I have, here, presumed to call together with an ardent hope to instruct them in the rudiments of the Christian faith. O Thou that sufferest little children to come unto thee and forbaddest them not, assist us mercifully in these our supplications and endeavors : since these young persons seem intended, by thy providential goodness, for the humble, though useful walks in life, be pleased, most graciously, to distribute, to each, qualities suitable to their respective conditions, give them patience to hear, ability to comprehend, and strength of memory to retain what I, now, wish to teach them : that, the seeds of piety being so early and so firmly deposited in their hearts, like the tree planted by the water-

side, they may bring forth fruit in due season, the genuine fruit of good living, whether they are all destined to an uninterrupted course of profitable labor to the grave, or whether thou shalt think fit, hereafter to call some of them upon the public theatre of the world: bless the laborer with health of body, with ease and contentment of mind: prosper the determined industry of the husbandman, with the dew of Heaven from above ⁴⁰ and with the blessings of the earth beneath: grant to the master a mind kindly disposed towards the servant and to the dumb animals committed to his care ⁴¹, to all in subordinate stations, faithfulness, and industry: to the young man, sobriety: to the maiden, virtue.

Thy faithfulness, O Lord, reacheth unto the Heavens: thy truth unto the clouds: thy wisdom endureth unto the end. It altereth not.

What region is there ⁴⁸, upon earth, where it is not conspicuously manifest? In the days of ignorance and darkness, when only a small ray of light glimmered on the Gentile world, Thou didst convey thy gracious will to a chosen few by patriarchs, and prophets, and holy-men. Moreover, when, out of thy un-

utterable love to mankind, Thou didst, mercifully, condescend to send thy son Jesus Christ into the world, Thou didst lead the wise men of the East by the special guidance of a star; but, after the glorious sun of righteousness had risen to his meridian height with healing on his wings, when the bright day of Christianity was fully come, Thou wast, then, pleased to commit all men, whether Jews or Gentiles, who chose to enlist under the banner of the cross, to the custody of an unerring protector, the Holy Ghost the comforter. Infuse, O father of mercies, and God of all comfort, into the minds of all the members of this our little Sion, a spirit of quietness, docility, and love of thy religion, that they may be fit objects for the protection of this holy guardian in the various turns and dangers of the present life; and may finally become inheritors of eternal glory with the saints of light, in the next, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The children, having each received instruction suitable to their tender years, and the catechism, which upon such occasion ought

never once to be omitted, being finished : it may not be amiss to conclude with the following prayer in a slow, devout, and audible voice, all kneeling, as before.

ENDING.

O universal God, and kind father of the world, who of thy bountiful goodness has favored us with another sabbath, wherein we have had an opportunity of improving ourselves in religious knowledge : grant that what we have, now, heard, we may remember, and remembering, may, by the influence of thy holy spirit, be induced to exemplify in our future conduct : and, because, through the frailty of our mortal nature we cannot but fall ; guide, and protect us, we sincerely beseech thee, with heavenly aid ; that we may so pass through things temporal as finally not lose the things eternal, for the sake of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Whereas the principal design of a Sunday school is to sow the seeds of early piety and virtue in the minds of little children, some of

whom, probably without such an opportunity would live and die under a cloud of the grossest ignorance : since, without a strict attention both to the time of coming together, and to business while together, none can ever make a proper proficiency, it is much to be wished that parents and masters of families will be earnest to enforce the strictest attention to the following rules.

1. That the children come to the usual place to be instructed, every Sunday, exactly at the time appointed.

2. That they be still, obedient, and industrious while together : in returning to their several homes quiet, and decent, in their behaviour the remainder of the day.

3. That they, always, go to Church, attend not only to the words and sense of the service ; but, particularly, to the custom of sitting, standing, kneeling, &c. at stated intervals, which may be learned from the instructions contained in some of the preceding pages, as well as from the example of well disposed Christians older than themselves.

4. That, if, at any time, a child, through ill-health, or any other cause, be unable to

attend, the true reason be assigned to the superintendant of the school.

5. That, if children omit coming on frivolous pretences, or, shall be in habits of coming late, of being refractory and idle, such shall be seriously admonished. If, after such admonition, they persevere in the same line of conduct, they shall be turned out, and, consequently deprived of those happy advantages, which otherwise, by God's blessing, may rationally be expected from a regular, diligent, and pious attention to the easy means of instruction, thus, afforded them.

CONFIRMATION.

This is one of those necessary duties required by the Christian church, which appears, as clear as any thing can appear, from the 17th and 18th verses of the 8th chapter of the Acts, to have originated with St. Peter and St. John. Hence it was continued, through a series of intervening ages, by the bishops,

their immediate successors, a class of men, generally speaking, eminent for their piety and learning, yet, inferior in every point of view, beyond comparison, to those, who were first inspired by our heavenly master. The mode of administering the sacred ceremonies of religion seems to have been much the same then, as now. Baptism was performed by the lower: preaching by every order: while, perhaps, for the sake of maintaining a proper degree of necessary subordination, it was, solemnly, reserved, as it is with us, to this very day, for the highest rank of ministers only, by prayer, and laying on of hands, to implore further measures of the Holy Ghost. This is a very antient ceremony, adopted by religious persons in the earliest times: used by our blessed Savior towards children: used by the Apostles: used continually in the protestant church, unto this very day. It is a natural indication of good will in persons who do it in the common intercourse of society; but, in this particular instance it is a direct notification, through the bishop, the highest member of our religious establishment, the humble servant of Almighty God, of the divine care,

towards the young candidates for confirmation : provided, which must be, always, understood, they each endeavor to preserve their title to his care, by a proper care over themselves.

On two accounts it is called confirmation.

1. The young persons voluntarily confirming the vow, which their god-fathers and god-mothers made at their respective baptisms, by submitting on their knees to the form prescribed in the prayer book.

2. Directly after episcopal imposition, joining in prayer with the clergy, elders, and all present, before the altar, to God the great father of mercies, that he would graciously condescend to confirm them in their new and high calling, to fulfil in their own persons, what was promised for them, by others in their infant years before they were able to answer for themselves. For the completion of this necessary duty, there is fixed, indeed, no single individual period. As soon as each can say the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, in the familiar language of his country, is moreover, instructed by his parents, his pastors, and masters, last of all examined and approved by

his parochial minister, with respect to his knowledge in the church catechism set forth for that purpose, he is invited to attend the bishop, when he comes officially into the country. No sooner does every human being know good and evil than he becomes accountable for his actions: much more so after he hath solemnly promised in his own person, before the sacred altar of God, in presence of the first minister of the christian church, to renounce the devil and all his works.

Such is, evidently, the design of this institution: which being founded on the best authority, and for the best purposes, certainly demands our best regards — a duty not to be performed or neglected at pleasure; but, imperiously required of every Christian. Why, then, should it be either lightly esteemed or totally disregarded, any more than baptism or burial, or other solemn offices prescribed by different religious establishments? What this or any country would be without such, we need only consider the state of society before their introduction, or the present condition of nations without the benefits resulting from them!

Stir up, O Lord, the will of me thy humble servant, to "let no day unhallowed pass," without endeavoring to teach the ordinances of thy law diligently unto these children, and to explain its testimonies, patiently, to those little ones committed to my care, that they walking blameless in thy commandments through their infant years, at the accustomed age, rising towards maturity, may chearfully submit to this holy ceremony. May they, in conformity to that solemn vow, now, taken upon themselves, evermore, be ready to please thee, through the merits of thy Son our Savior. Amen.

FORGIVENESS.

No one will deny, that the author and finisher of our faith, first, singly, and firmly did not only venture to oppose most of the established principles, but, actually by his Apostles, introduced a system of religion opposite to opinions, which universally predominated throughout what was, then, called the

civilized world, at the very æra, wherein he condescended to lay aside his celestial nature and came to visit us in great humility. The most popular virtues, at that time, were a fiery spirit, ungovernable courage, and implacable resentment. To this accords the character of an illustrious hero drawn by a great poet of antiquity :

“Intrepid, fierce, of unforgiving rage.”

To these blazing qualities the Christian religion presents the mildest and completest contrast.

Blessed are the meek, &c.

Be ye merciful, &c.

Pray for them that despitefully use you.

Forgive and ye shall be forgiven.

After our blessed Lord, in his admirable sermon upon the mount, instructs us to pray for our temporal wants, it is worthy of remark that he, next, directs our attention to a spiritual affair of much more importance — namely — to ask pardon for our offences. Now, as there is no man living that sinneth not, but taking one with another, gives, generally speaking, just as much cause of dis-

pleasure to his fellow creatures, as they to him, it seems impossible to devise any thing more natural, more fair, or more appropriate, than to implore the divine goodness to forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. Every reader, at least, may not understand exactly, what our obligations, to forgiveness, are. I shall, endeavor, therefore, to shew how far they ought to extend, and where they ought to stop.

It is not, perhaps, too much to assert, that, with regard to our individual selves, all offences, whether proceeding from personal affronts, or private injuries, which can be overlooked with safety, ought to be consigned to oblivion; but, if the vindication of our own character, or the public interest, call imperiously for the iron arm of the law, as that must sometimes be the case, every mild and good man will proceed with temperate reluctance, endeavoring continually to practise the salutary rule of his heavenly Master, to do as he would be done by. If some have spitefully intreated you, that is not a sufficient reason, why you should return the like, because we are exhorted not to render evil for evil, but, con-

trariwise, blessing. Besides, you may have given some provocation, and, if not, you have no more reason to fear the slanderer, than to regard the "empty hollowness of the idle wind, which you respect not as it passes, turning past evils to advantages," and remembering so long as thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee. If others are frail and ignorant, are you free from infirmities? Ponder thine own ways, then, and make such reasonable allowance for the foibles of your neighbors, as human frailty and human ignorance demand. Wish well, at least, to all, however they may have offended: be ready to accept an apology, and to credit their repentance, always, holding in mind, that, in the generality of disputes, both sides are commonly to blame, and each thinking itself right, is, partly apt to take the unkind, while it is certainly, always, better to err on the merciful side of the question.

This temper of forgiveness towards our fellow creatures becomes us all, in our private vocations, unequivocally, to adopt; but, in our public ministry, from the king upon the throne to the lowest officer in the state, the

welfare of society imperiously requires a different mode of acting, though always tinged with that generous spirit of forgiveness enjoined in that short, but comprehensive prayer, which our blessed Lord hath taught us. Persons in authority cannot, consistently with their duty, which they are upon oath bound to perform impartially towards friends and enemies, to rich and poor, avoid inflicting punishment for the reformation of the guilty, protection of the innocent, and welfare of all. This, however, they will do, if true Christians, in a way leading to edification and not to destruction.

Forbearing one another and forgiving one another, be assured, will have a considerable degree of influence towards our Creator's forgiving us. It is a principal, certainly not the only qualification necessary for divine acceptance, at the last. The performance of every part of our Christian duty, to the best of our ability, is expected to have its share. That God is merciful, no one can doubt: that he will be just, all well know. Our errors, through the intercession of Christ, by our repentance, may be pardoned; but, we may all rest confi-

dently assured, that the gates of Heaven will be for ever and for ever shut against that man, who dares to persevere in any one deliberate, and, consequently, unrepented sin.

Be it then, my endeavor, in humble imitation of the glorified Messiah, to use such courtesy in my words: to adopt such lenity in my conversation: to pursue such suavity in my manners, and, to practise such a temper of forgiveness throughout the whole tenor of my conduct towards others, as may, for his sake, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord. Amen.

CHARITY.

No virtue so high in the Christian code: none so generally useful is oftener named and less understood. It is not, always, as is, too commonly, supposed, the actuality or the greatness of the gift, which renders the memorial grateful before God. If this was the case, what would be the avail of the widow's mite? Where the merit of those well-disposed persons, who have nothing to give their neighbors in time of trouble? So, on the

contrary, what worthy characters would they be, who, in the multitude of their riches cast gifts into the treasury, instigated by unworthy motives, interest, ambition, or some other predominating passion, without an ear to listen, a heart to feel, or a disposition to comfort? It consists, as is admirably displayed by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiii. in a mind properly turned both by word and deed, towards the whole human race, Jews and Proselytes, Catholics and Protestants, Christians of every sect, not content merely in feeling, but, in endeavoring to relieve the wants of others, consistently with our own.

“Laud be to Thee, O God,” who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth : who, by thy governance, hast so ordered the course of the present world, that any one, however poor, is enabled to practise this most excellent virtue, whereby we obtain remission of our sins and happiness in the next, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, now, henceforth, and for ever. Amen.

PARENTS TO CHILDREN.

It is hardly necessary to remark that infancy requires little more than a strict attention to the predominating calls of nature regulated by parental care. These pages may chance to fall under the eye of defaulters in so obvious a respect. I intreat, therefore, the indulgence of those readers, who need no intimation to excite them to the discharge of their important trust.

Because the divine law is so explicit on the duty of children to their parents, and is, altogether silent with respect to that of parents towards their children, it must not hence be inferred, that we are at liberty to do as we please in this, any more than in the clearer prescribed branches of our Christian calling. No mind, not even the most untutored, can fail, in a country governed by such an admirable system of laws, and blessed by such an unrivalled religious establishment, to acquire a proper sense of its parental duties: either from what the Holy Scriptures generally pro-

claim, to glean it from the daily observations on brute animals, or to imbibe it from the plain suggestions of reason. The affectionate deportment of Isaac and Rebecca towards their sons Jacob and Esau is set forth an example to future times. What, else, induced Elisha to raise the widow's only child, than the most perfect approbation of her maternal love? Thus did our blessed Lord, at Capernaum, by a similar act of compassion. To the same import are the lively admonitions of St. Paul. If we descend and carry our researches throughout the whole order of animated nature: we shall find creatures, even the most harmless, vigilant and active, with few exceptions, in protection of their offspring till they are able to protect themselves. The silent admonitions of conscience impress the self-same natural lesson. So productive is our country, so well adapted is its government to the well-being of its subjects, that no man need fear of perishing through want: nor despair, however humble his degree, of improving his first estate by a regular course of virtuous exertions. Few populous towns are without an example of this sort; but, as

the future prosperity of children depends very much on the conduct of their parents towards them in their early years: I, again, crave pardon of the reader, if, in the following remarks any thing occurs, that to his steady and tender mind may seem, perhaps, too obvious to notice.

That some preparation is, indispensably necessary, previous to the birth of every human being, no one will deny. What it, precisely is, every parent will, readily, communicate to such as are ignorant, and, desirous to know. When the dawnings of reason begin to appear with commencing childhood, fresh duties begin to arise, increasing with increasing time. For this period, what form of instruction can be better calculated to teach us our duty to God and man, than the matchless catechism of our church? The silent admonition of example is, always, more persuasive than precept: and, no where, it must be confessed, does it shine with such appropriate lustre, as in the eye of youth. Parents should, at all times, be correct in their deportment; but, when children, who are prone to imitate both their mental and corporal habits, begin to

know good and evil, a much greater degree of vigilance is requisite, lest any thing faulty, thus sanctioned by the pernicious influence of example, should be copied and prove ruinous to their children. With what grace, or what effect, can any father presume to reprimand his son for those very vices, which he commits: to caution a servant against irregularities, into which he daily slips, or to praise perfections, which he only talks of? Virtue with him is an empty name, and charity no more than a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

Having each endeavored, to the utmost, to train their minds to virtue: it next becomes parents to seek for situations suitable to the different capacities of their children: so that they may become useful as well as good members of society, attending continually upon this very thing — by a frugal and industrious course of life to lay up a portion of their possessions according to the laws and customs of the country. Let the parents, then, whose uninterrupted good conduct has, thus, happily contributed to make their children worthy members of society: and whose days have been prolonged to see the utmost perfection

of their wishes, sit down happy in the evening of their well-spent lives, with thankfulness to God, confidently hoping to attain "the treasury of everlasting joy" in the world to come, when sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed, who, to my existence hast added a similar instance of thy goodness in making me a parent. As thou satisfiest the daily wants of every living thing, just so, may I humbly endeavor to imitate thy paternal providence in this imitable perfection! May I never forget the tender hand, that led me, safely, through the helpless age of infancy; but in return, now, remember gratefully to discharge my serious duty towards those little ones, whose lives are only a continuation of my own. In consulting their general welfare: may I, earnestly look up to thee, the creator and preserver of all mankind. Strengthen me, through an honest "course of profitable labor to the grave," to provide both for their souls and bodies. As they advance in youth, may I neither correct their failings with too much severity on one

hand, nor reward their merits with dangerous partiality on the other.

Finally, O gracious Lord! may I never cease to recommend my precepts by the persuasive admonition of my own virtue. May I never fail to enliven my instructions by the powerful influence of a bright example, for the sake of the glorified Messiah. Amen.

CHILDREN TO PARENTS.

We have ten commandments for the regulation of our conduct from the law of Moses, sanctioned by the law of Christ. The four first prescribe the duty of the creature to the creator. The next degree of reverence being due from the child to the parent, is, accordingly, enjoined strictly in the fifth. Here the young reader will do well to observe a peculiarity strikingly different from the remaining nine — a positive command, Honor thy father and thy mother, with the annexation of a blessing — that thy days may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

The former is intended as a spur : the latter as a reward for his obedience. Now this is the promise of the Almighty to the Israelites, by whom the fertile country of Canaan was considered as the source and emblem of temporal prosperity. By it we Christians, also, are to understand, in a figurative though true sense, the promise of the life, which now is, and, of that which is to come. We need not, however, limit our attention to any particular passage of scripture. The universal language of holy writ : the loud voice of nature, together with the silent admonitions of reason, confirm the same precept. In the early ages of society filial outrage was punished with death. All the men of the city shall stone him with stones that he die. By the emphatic denuntiation of Solomon what less is the young scorner taught to expect, than the heavy judgements of God sooner or later upon his rebellious head ? Whoever is hard-hearted to his decrepid father, and unkind to his aged mother, to whom can it be expected he will be good ? What sin will not such a ruffian rise in time, to commit ? A disobedient son, generally, turns out a bad member of society.

He is a marked character in the village, where it is his lot to live. Of such every one is suspicious or afraid. Who would hire him for a servant, or take him for an apprentice? Next to God, whom ought we to obey before those, who brought us into being, and sustained us in our helpless years: Are not young animals wild and tame under the protection of their parents? Is not the one as prone to imitate its faithful guide as the other is fond to execute its tender trust? See the young brood gathering under the wings of the protecting hen against the impending storm! Behold the young lamb fly to the timid ewe, before the ferocious dog; but, above all, let the filial behavior of our blessed Redeemer, who, though the pattern of perfection, was subject to his parents, banish even the shadow of disobedience from your doors, a crime, at first, like a slowly flowing stream, which increaseth as it goes, gradually undermines the foundation of every virtue, and pours in a deluge of evils.

O Thou! whom no similitude can exactly represent what Thou art in thyself, or what Thou art to me! I thank Thee that Thou hast vouchsafed to call me into being, and to

place me under the tender guidance of those, whom next to Thee I am bound to honor. Assist me, with thy grace to seek Thee, my Creator early, by an early obedience to my parents, whose title Thou delightest to assume : as I encrease in stature, may a sense of my duty to them continually remind me of the increasing duties I owe to Thee, the common parent of mankind : as I advance in years may neither the vanity of the world exalt me, nor a confidence in my own abilities among the sundry and manifold changes of the world seduce me to forget what they, under thy fatherly providence, did for me, when I was able to do nothing for myself : and, should it seem fit to thy paternal wisdom, to prolong their existence to the utmost extremity of human life : may the filial example of my blessed Savior stimulate me, more and more, under their growing infirmities and pressing wants, to recompense them the things they have done by every endearment in my power, that I may obtain thereby, the reward proffered to those, who, diligently, live after thy fifth commandment, through the same Jesus Christ thy son, my redeemer. Amen.

UNIVERSAL DELUGE.

Some things are presented to us in Scripture, while a variety of others are daily before our eyes on the general face of nature, which it is as impossible to comprehend, as it would be impossible to contradict. Among these the destruction of the world in the days of Noah, when the fountains of the great deep were broken up, is a memorable instance: and, as such it seems, purposely, corroborated by testimony different from every other. Its truth is not, merely, established by the Mosaic account, but, stands confirmed by the different traditions of pagan nations, Greeks and Romans, Chinese, Persians, and probably by many others in the interior of the Asiatic continent! Clear, however, as this important fact appears from sacred and profane writers, it receives still further additional corroboration from a circumstance unknown to many and considered by few, which is the mutilated state visible in various districts of the globe; islands, torn from continents, frightful

Argil - Pottery clay
Argil

caverns, dangerous cliffs, *clayey* argillaceous strata on one coast exactly corresponding with the opposite shores of another⁴³, barren rocks⁴⁴ on the surface of vegetable soils, subterraneous rivers⁴⁵ and volcanic fires⁴⁶. That the earth has actually experienced some great change since its original formation, seems credible beyond all doubt to any one conversant in the order of fossils found in countless multitudes at every depth, in all countries, wherever the hand of industry has displaced the external surface, or permeated the depths below. To specify particulars might amuse the reader; but would far exceed the design of this little work. To turn the doubtful and to excite the inconsiderate, a few of the most remarkable instances, I trust, will be sufficient.

In the Gulph of Venice, on the Coast of Dalmatia, l. 43. there is a small island delineated in foreign charts, so full of human bones, at all depths, constituting as it were, in many places, part of the rock, that it is called Ossero. An excellent specimen of a skull, impregnated with matter in no respect different from stone, and confidently reported to resemble the stratum from whence it was taken,

Argil

has passed through

with the entire teeth of the upper jaw, and similar to what have been hewn out while forming the military works of Gibraltar, was deposited in the library of Sidney-college early in the 17th century, where it may be seen unto this day. From the bed of the river at Harwich, have been drawn up teeth and bones of elephants. A little previous to the publication of Morton's History of Northamptonshire, a complete skeleton of a lion was discovered in the slate quarries at Weldon : where also, in 1792, some laborers surprised the parochial minister Mr. Ray with some huge bones, which Dr. John Hunter did not scruple to declare belonged to a rhinoceros. These were taken out of a gravel pit in the same parish. Parts of crocodiles are not uncommon on the coasts of Wilts. and Devonshire. A shell of a tortoise was found in the perforation at Highgate. Minor examples without number might be adduced, as the exuviae of fish sometimes so little injured, as to make it difficult to distinguish them from the existing species : trees in coal pits and below the level of the sea : impressions of plants peculiar to the eastern world : all conducing to prove the

*Cast skin. cast shells. whatever is cast
by animals.*

supposition that animal and vegetable bodies, retaining their adhesive power, were, generally, intermixed in the dissolving chaos ; and there deposited when the rain from Heaven was restrained, and where they still remain, forming part of an incontrovertible proof of the amazing power of a wise, and eternal God, whose way is in the sea : whose footsteps are not known !

If the superficies of the earth does actually present an appearance of having undergone some material change since the creation : if its external strata, as far as man is able to explore, do actually contain the vestiges of præ-existing life : these must be attributed to some cause : which we have the best reasons to believe was the deluge, that in the days of Noah, we are told, covered all the high hill under the whole heaven. .

Let no one, then, presume to doubt or disbelieve what he has not faculties to comprehend : let him rather reflect in silence : let him humbly adore the wisdom of that being, who, in the beginning created the heaven and the earth : who, at his pleasure, strengthens the fountains of the great deep : who maketh

Arcturus, Orion, and the Pleiades: yea, whose works it is impossible to find out.

May the sun, which shines on me by day, and the moon, which guides me by night: may the air I breathe: may the earth, which carries and sustains me: may nature, animate and inanimate, so kindly framed to supply my wants and to multiply my pleasures, witness against me, now and ever, O Heavenly Father, if I ungratefully neglect, through the merits of my Savior to thank Thee for the past, to implore Thee for future blessings, to contemplate and admire thy wondrous works. Amen.

EARTHQUAKE, THUNDER AND LIGHTNING.

Among the awful visitations, to which the world is subject, the earthquake stands foremost: among the manifold blessings, with which our island abounds, exemption from this direful calamity, except in a very distant degree, scarcely once, perhaps, perceivable during the life of man, is most prominent.

As few, or none have, ever, experienced any thing so tremendous: it will be difficult, even, to conceive a scene perilous beyond extreme. Fancy to yourselves, however, what has, actually, happened, and what, therefore, may happen again. Imagine, in a country situate on the fairest portion of the globe, enjoying the blessings of peace and plenty, amidst the general serenity of birds singing, cattle grazing, farmers working, as usual, in the fields: women grinding at the mill: some marrying, others given in marriage: men all chearfully engaged in their various stations: the earth, suddenly, at an instant, opening and swallowing up Dathan, and covering the congregation of Abiram. Imagine the Italian cities⁴⁸, whose ruins, the lugúbrious monument of divine wrath, have, lately, been discovered, sinking with their inhabitants into a tremendous gulph, far below the natural level: over which, in a few years, a new surface has arisen, productive of corn and woodlands; but, the fate of Lisbon, Messina, and the Curacoa⁴⁹, recent examples of omnipotence within the memory of the existing race, place

mournful
sorrowful

the possibility of these awful facts beyond dispute.

Second to the earthquake, whose extreme effects are providentially limited to some particular countries : the sound of God Almighty's thunder goeth out into all lands, and its attendant lightning unto the ends of the earth. We must not, however, consider these, merely, as intentional afflictions, though for wise reasons, they are sometimes, used as such : rather, modes of the divine dealing with mankind : who speaketh not only by his revealed instructions in the Scriptures, but, by these tremendous instruments of his power, a language intelligible to all nations, always. In this, as in all other acts of his providence, the Supreme Being seems actuated by a principle of love towards mankind : in purifying the air, dispelling the storms, ripening the fruits, and, what is of far greater consequence, admonishing us by his inflictions to render ourselves proper objects of his mercy.

Thus, does the Almighty Ruler of the Universe give man, every where, in every town, in every village, and in every corner of the

country, from Dan even to Beersheba⁵⁰, these striking intimations of his irresistible power, of his unsearchable wisdom, of his unutterable goodness, and, occasionally, of his avenging justice.

Who, then, having once heard the thunder pealing over his head, seen the whole firmament of Heaven illumined by the lightning, felt the earth tremble under his feet, or witnessed the flocks scattered by the irresistible thunderbolts, which “split the unwedgable and knarled oak,” dash in pieces the proudest pyramids⁵¹ of art, and deprive the unwary of instant life, shall presume to stand in thy presence undismayed, and shall dare to taunt, when thy judgments are abroad in the earth, O Lord God Almighty, whose infinite spirit, which, at first, formed the world, though invisible to us, is intimately present to every part, and from age to age, superintends and animates the whole.

My son, be advised, while it is permitted thee, to stand in awe and sin not : let not the sun go down upon thy wrath : hast thou sinned ? do so no more ; but, ask pardon, for thy former sins. Serve the Lord in fear, and

rejoice unto him with reverence, for having kindly assigned thy lot in a land blessed with such a variety of blessings. Amen, for Christ's Jesus sake.

SEASONS.

To those, whose daily habits lead them to dwell in the open air⁵², it must be obvious that an uninterrupted series of warm weather would be unwholesome : perpetual heat intolerable : and continual cold equally injurious to animal and vegetable life. In the æquatorial regions, as well as in those adjacent to the polar circles, there are two seasons actually different. In the one, the scorching period continues seven or eight months : which is regularly succeeded by dismal rains⁵³ throughout the remaining year. In the other : the summer does not exceed three or four, towards the close of which the heat, gathering day by day, under successive suns, becomes, at last, excessively oppressive⁵⁴. The ensuing winter is, of course, cold, long, and dismal. It is, only, in the temperate climates, that the inhabitants are

blessed with four regular vicissitudes. In what part of the earth, does the divine wisdom shine more conspicuous, than throughout our own country, where the heat, gradually decreasing with the declining summer and shortening autumn, allows the fruits to ripen by degrees, and favors the labors of the industrious husbandman, in filling his barns with all manner of store : where too, on the contrary, after the end of winter, the rising spring with the lengthening days, and the increasing heat of the sun, contribute to revive all animated nature, assisting each in its growth, every herb yielding seed in the field, and in the garden, every tree of the forest, from the lowly hawthorn to the royal oak, every beast of the earth, every fowl of the air, and every living thing that creepeth upon the earth, to the end of summer ?

Does not, then, this variety of the seasons, heightened in our own country beyond all others by the frequent variations in the weather during, what we call, the most settled periods, as well as by the refreshing breeze of every returning evening, deserve our admiration ? Ought it not to excite our gratitude

and secure our love towards that eternal being, who cannot worthily be praised?

O Lord our governor! whose name is, in no respect, more excellent throughout the world than in this merciful act of thy providence, of adapting the different seasons of the year, as well as the vicissitudes of day and night, to the common benefit of mankind: May the rising spring excite my industry! may the growing summer improve my talents! may the abundant autumn increase my gratitude! may the seasonable cold of winter remind me of the necessities of my fellow-creatures! may the outgoings of the evening and of the morning call forth my praises! and may no period of my life pass unheeded by, without my promptness to adore Thee, the fountain of all goodness, which was, and is, and ever will be. Amen.

EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

If the glory of God and the happiness of man be thy "ultimate end and aim," though many things may arise to impede and foil thy

laudable pursuits: from the pride of some, from the obstinacy of others, from the ill will of more, from the treachery of friends, and from the malevolence of enemies: still, if thou hast but patience to endure, thou shalt finally overcome. Persevere. If God does not crown thy virtuous efforts with immediate success: it is not that he either forgets or overlooks thee, but, that thy day of trial is not over, nor the time of retribution yet arrived. Endure, and thou shalt overcome. The glory of God shall be thy reward. Determined perseverance is sure to conquer⁵⁵. God never abandons the upright and sincere. Endeavor to be first in thy calling, whatever it be. Let no man outshine thee in well-doing: so, although thou mayest not be able, always, to excel; yet, if thou makest a proper use of the religious talent committed to thy care, losing no time, omitting no opportunity to do good during thy time of trial, here: in the far more important scene that is to commence, hereafter, thou shalt shine as the brightness of the firmament, with the righteous for ever and ever.

Defer not till to-morrow what you can do with equal convenience to-day. The morrow may never come. Waste not the meanest trifle, either of time or of any thing, while, with equal convenience it may be applied to any purpose. Not one single moment ought to pass unprofitably by. Of the past, it is vain to account : the present only is your own : the next, though near, may be denied you. To every hour either some necessary duty, some rational delight, or some useful employment was intended to be annexed ⁵⁶. Surcharge not the arriving day with affairs, which belong not to it. What you neglect to do in its proper season, will probably thrust itself upon you at some inconvenient and unlooked for hour. To every thing there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven. God and man, time and eternity, one day our own, another the welfare of our country or the concerns of others, arise in succession to our view, and ought strongly to attract our care. As ignorance and vice in maturer age are, generally, the certain consequences of neglected youth : just so, pain, poverty, and sorrow, towards the evening of life, frequently arise

from idleness in manhood. Man is a social being: he was not created for self-gratification only; but, for the general good of the whole human race. Try, therefore, to make yourself useful in this life, in order that you may be eternally happy in the next. Let the rewards, which the system of our holy religion holds up to our view, awaken your ambition, and animate your pursuit: let them excite you to stretch every nerve, to set every faculty at work, to run not only with speed, but, with patience, also, the race that is set before you⁵⁷.

INTEMPERANCE.

⁵⁸ “It is not, nor it cannot, come to good.” No truth is more evident to those, whom length of days, aided by reflection, has enabled to observe the consequences of intemperate drinking. The remark of such serious and good people is, that this vice, however pleasing and delusive, at first, never fails to operate and end, sooner or later, in one or in all the four following ways.

1. Ruin of the constitution.
2. Destruction of property.
3. Loss of character.
4. Mental depression.

Considering then, the various evils, which are sure, some day, to ensue from the above impure source : let us see how we may avoid them. This is to be effected only by invoking the divine goodness to assist us in our reflections, and to hear our prayers.

Do I pursue all those modes of life, which tend to keep my body in soberness and to preserve my mind in a Christian temper ? Am I attentive to my business throughout the entire six days ? On the seventh do I regularly repair to church : and, there, in presence of my God, and before my neighbors let my light so shine, that they may see my good works ? Do I, ever, retire to my chamber, and meditate in silence ? When I seek for company, am I cautious in selecting such only as is sober, cheerful, and improving ? If, ever, for that must sometimes happen, I am compelled to dwell with Mesech, do I tarry long at the wine, or do I consider promptly what is set before me, and so retire, before it inflames me, calmly

and decently to my house? Am I, habitually, temperate, at all times and in all places; or, am I only so at home, where my own pocket must pay for my indulgence? Do I meanly give way to my appetites abroad, when wine giveth color in the cup, at feasts and entertainments, where the hospitality of my neighbors and the liberality of the public exceed my prudence, as well as their ability to indulge me? Or does not my life, instead, of some casual deviations from the strict rules of sobriety, present one continued picture of chambering and excess? If rich? what account shall I be able to give for the abuse of that abundance, with which a bountiful providence has blessed me, the superfluity of which would have made many poor persons healthy and happy? If poor? Have I no aged parents, whom I thus, dishonor, no wife sorrowing in private, no small children in want of bread, no relatives ashamed of my misconduct, nor any creditors, whom my intemperance defrauds? Am I not growing daily older, becoming gradually weaker, and approaching nearer to the grave? Shall I not be called to judgement, to account for the

rious acts of my misspent life? If, then, I have any serious thoughts of another world, surely it is high time to amend in this, before I be too far stricken in years, and to implore God to renew a right spirit within me?

O bounteous Lord! "whose goodness is so unmatchable," look down I humbly pray, upon me, whom for wise reasons Thou hast placed in the midst of various temptations. Enable me to adopt, day by day, such habits of temperance in private as may not dishonor that pure example of abstinence for my sake: when my avocations call me into public, strengthen me by thy grace to take heed to my ways, lest by giving reins to my appetites, I give offence to Thee: and grant that I may conduct myself so abstemiously, upon all occasions, as to look forward without terror to that awful hour, which will dissolve my connections with this world, and bring me into thy glorious presence in the next. This prayer I earnestly address to thy divine majesty, in the name and through the mediation of Him, who has taught us by word and deed, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Amen.

CRUELTY.

This is a disposition of the mind that delights in hurting any part of animated nature. Of all the vices, which afflict the world, none surely has so little self-gratification, none is more repugnant to the mild spirit of Christianity, and consequently none more abominable in the eye of God and of all good men.

In what state of life am I placed? am I a man under authority, having hired servants, orphan apprentices, or soldiers under me? how do I treat them? are they allowed a sufficient quantity of wholesome food, of comfortable raiment, and supplied with all things needful to their dependent state? Do I treat them kindly? Do I not only permit them to go to church on the sabbath day; but, do I, moreover, encourage them, by the regularity of my own example? Instead of this merciful line of conduct, am I not in habits of rigorously enacting more than I ought? Not content with six days labor, have I not cruelly

required somewhat of the seventh also, either employing them unnecessarily at home, or sending them frivolously abroad? Have I not compelled them to eat such food, as I could not endure at my own table, or not allowed them enough of the same quality, of which I daily partake? Do I not use my apprentice harshly, cloathing him meanly, feeding him poorly, and beating him continually far beyond the reason of his fault? Do I not carry myself imperiously towards those illiterate privates, whom the laws of my country have put under my command for its defence, without even once calling to mind, the kind behavior of Cornelius, the good centurion, which recommended him to the special favor of the Almighty?

We derive so much from dumb animals, both with respect to utility and pleasure, that to pass them over unnoticed, would be ungrateful to that bountiful parent, who is their Creator as well as ours.

Of the reclaimed kind there are four, which ought to stand pre-eminent in our affections.

These are the

Horse,

Ox,
Sheep,
and
Dog.

1. From what other creature, in this country, does man derive so much essential service? It tills the ground and fills our barns with autumnal plenty: submits to any thing and refuses nothing: is bold in battle, pleased to carry his master in the chace, exhausts his strength, and even, not unfrequently, when barbarously treated by his unfeeling driver, expires under the impending thong, in trying to do more than he is able.

2. What it wants in swiftness, it amply compensates by supplying our necessities, daily; in several ways, too obvious to remind the butcher, the husbandman, or, in fact, any one whatever his degree in life may be, whose morning, mid-day, or evening repast ought to stimulate him to treat it with that kindness, represented in scripture to be a striking feature in the character of a righteous man.

3. This matchless animal selected by our blessed Lord himself, as the symbol of inno-

cence, fills our pockets with gold, enriches our pastures, furnishes our tables, and supplies us with more cloathing than all other animals in the world together.

4. Notwithstanding it is inferior, in point of mere utility, to the three preceding, its services, though of a different kind, are such as could not easily be dispensed with: it guards the property, protects the person, and animates the spirit of its master by its sagacious actions, and cheering notes in the chase. In fine, the dog, of all other creatures, which the Lord God hath made, may be, fairly, called the symbol of fidelity to mankind.

How am I circumstanced, with regard to the first of these valuable gifts of my kind Creator? If master of a horse, do I indicate a due sense of gratitude by shewing mercy to my beast, in humble imitation of him, who taketh care of all? Whether at home or on a journey, do I omit to feed it regularly", "clapping its affectionate neck," encouraging it with my voice, and exciting it by the lenity of my gestures, rarely beating it, never intemperately, and only when in fault, or, forgetful of my generous benefactor, am I apt to treat

my faithful slave, as though it had no feeling : riding, driving, or spurring it unmercifully, paying no attention to feeding it generally, or nursing it after long journeys as I ought to do ? If a servant, how do I, in this respect, discharge my trust ? In habits of driving post on the public roads, do I use my earthly master according to that fair rule of my heavenly master, doing as I would be done by, in treating his horses as though they were my own, and as though my bread depended on their well being ? On the contrary, do I drive them cruelly without regard to weather, and leave them reeking at the doors of bad publicans, with whom I spend many a fleeting hour in drinking away what belongs to their nourishment and comfort ? Thus torturing and shortening the lives of those poor animals : so finding myself wrong I am led by degrees, to set aside all scruples and to tell a deliberate falsehood before my master's face, to escape detection of a crime, which, if not checked in time, will prove much worse in its future consequences to me, than to those whom I, now, so wickedly abuse ?

Am I in the service of a farmer, who taking me for a trusty man, covenants for a certain annual sum, and commits to my care the management of his team, whereon depend the cultivation of his farm, the exportation of its produce, the regular payment of his rent and taxes, together with the aggregate welfare of his family, besides my wages? Do I ever consider the high importance of my trust and exert myself accordingly, rising early, particularly in seed's time and in harvest, to feed and dress them before the commencement of the long laboring day? Do I work them steadily, taking every little opportunity of giving them ease and refreshment, that they may be strong to labor? In journeyings often on the public road, do I drive them cautiously, and watch their motions in walking steadily by their sides? or, so long as they get on, do I mind not how: either riding carelessly on the shafts, sleeping on the waggon, or loitering at a distance, thereby endangering their safety, as well as the lives of all his majesty's subjects, who chance to meet me? Instead of being thus alert at my point of duty, am I not indo-

lent in a morning, and, do I consequently neglect them? When stalled, either through the badness of the roads, or by an overmuch imposing load, have I not passionately flogged them often, never attempting to put my shoulder to the wheel, or to use other modes of help, and good-naturedly encouraged them? So have I not cruelly injured the property of my master, and thereby shewn myself unworthy of the least of thy mercies, O God, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy.

Am I possessed of the second? have I a yoke of oxen to plough my farm? have I cows, to supply me with the various necessaries of a dairy? Am I solicitous to reward their daily services by a general kindness: feeding them regularly, and keeping them warm under the rigor of winter? Contrariwise, am I not in habits of treating them morosely: using opprobrious language, striking them with improper instruments, because they do not move fast enough to please my humor: and keeping them cold and badly, just as if the same provident being, who formed their bodies, had forgotten to give them feelings like me?

What have I to do with the third? Am I the fortunate proprietor of a flock : or, for an annual sum of money, do I superintend it for another more opulent than myself? In either case, do I endeavor to the best of my ability to merit God's unspeakable kindness, in an instance productive of so much comfort to the human race : by using this inoffensive creature with the tenderness it merits at my hands? On the contrary, do I barbarously treat it, by setting my dog to tear its ears in fetching it back when separated from the flock, leaving it to be tormented with insects during the oppressive heat of summer, or neglecting it to pine with bad food amid the wets of winter?

If such is my conduct : how unworthy am I of that wholesome food, and warm cloathing, which a kind providence affords me in this innocent and matchless animal ! How can I expect mercy from the Father of all mercies, while I deliberately and cruelly with-hold it from so valuable a part of his handy works ?

Have I a fourth of these his good things to guard my property, to defend my person, to keep watch over my flock, to amuse me in the

field, to guard and please me in my house? How do I treat this sagacious and faithful animal? do I reward his services by every little tender endearment, stroking his head when affectionately thrust between my knees for that endearing purpose, calling it cheerfully, speaking kindly, always, giving it the scraps and crumbs of my table? or, as the commonness of the divine gifts sometimes renders men insensible of their value: so am I not, through bad habits, indifferent about this? Do I not return its affectionate actions towards me with moroseness towards it? So long as my own appetites are satisfied, am I not forgetful of this poor affectionate animal, that watches all my movements, attends, even, to the cadence of my voice, and knoweth my very looks! When, in fault, as moderate chastisement, if, seasonably, given, is, generally, if not, always, sufficient, do I correct him, accordingly: or do I beat him beyond measure, not in the least moved by his mournful cries and submissive gestures? In training him to range the fields, and to permeate the woodlands for my amusement, have I recourse to gradual means and frequent encouragements, or, by

the most unrelenting severity, do I not overawe his temper, make him fear and hate me, thereby defeating my own ends ?

Is this, then, my unfeeling mode of treating an animal purposely created to protect and serve me ? With what grace ? with what propriety can I ask the great God of Nature to protect me from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, or from the sickness that destroyeth at noon day, or to hide me under his pavilion in the evil-time, unless I amend ere long, and shew myself by the future tenor of my actions, towards all his creatures, not undeserving of the blessings I enjoy, and of those I pray for ?

O Thou, father of mercies and God of all comfort ! “ how do I thank Thee ” for having placed me in dominion, over thy works ! As Thou, O adorable Creator, declarest thy Almighty power, most chiefly in shewing pity : so incline me to follow Thee, in this amiable perfection. Thy generous providence is benignly extended to the general welfare. To be cruel to dumb animals, to refuse them food, to deny them the common comforts of existence, or to oppress them wantonly, in

any way, is, manifestly, wicked: because it is contrary to thy goodness, which, even, descends to all those beings that are inferior to man! If, then, the lower grades of thy creation deserve my attention, how much more are my fellow creatures entitled to my compassion! May I not take too much thought for myself! May I omit no opportunity to alleviate the wants of others! may I, never, like the Priest and Levite, leave the least of my brethren or the poorest animal to suffer, while it is in my power to relieve them, and, finally, may I by kindness to every living thing, throughout every day of my life, by thy merits, O blessed Jesus, be entitled to that glorious reward promised to the merciful on the "general all-ending day." Amen.

SWEARING.

Save and except the various authorities to be deduced from scripture, as well as the positive necessity men are under, frequently, of appealing to God on affairs of temporal import, it is plain both from the words and spirit

of the third commandment, that oaths are not, indiscriminately, prohibited.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, that is to say : you may use his holy name on serious and good ; but, you are strictly prohibited on frivolous and bad occasions, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain : meaning, that God will punish all such as shall presume, thus, prophanely, “to break his law.” To the former may be referred all important acts of truth in courts of justice : informations before magistrates upon which warrants are granted for the apprehension of offenders : the declaration of an applicant for a marriage licence, and many others. Under the latter are included all those canting hypocritical appeals to the Supreme Being, purposely used with pious action “to sugar over” the interested designs of the deceitful, or, with a malicious intent to draw down a curse upon their enemies ; but, which in fact, is more likely to terminate in their own disgrace or ruin. The one is a serious acknowledgment of the providence of that Almighty Being, whom we venture to invoke. An oath so taken, therefore,

is, unquestionably a most solemn act of religion. So, contrariwise, the other, commonly called prophane swearing, is a most abominable and loudly crying sin. Of this, surely, not even the most thoughtless person can long doubt, if he will only pause awhile and ask himself a few plain questions — who is that Being, on whose name, I so rashly and so deliberately call? The Creator and Lord of the Universe, who holdeth the thunder: who drieth up the water-flood: who setteth bounds to the sea: whom no man hath seen, nor can see: in whom we live and move and have our being: who gave his son to die for our sins and to rise again for our justification.

To take thy name in vain!!!

Pardon me, O Lord our righteousness! who hast caused the glorious light of the Gospel, now, to shine throughout the world, and in no country, with greater lustre than in our happy island, protected by a system of laws unknown to foreign nations. May it please Thee, “whose servant I account myself,” to enable me to hold these acts of thy providence in continual remembrance! may I shew forth my thankfulness by a regular course of good

words and faithful works during my residence of trial here, through Jesus Christ our Savior, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, for days, and for seasons, and for years, world without end. Amen.

LYING.

Among the catalogue of crimes, which disgrace ⁶⁰ and derange the good order of society, few, it is to be lamented, are more common ⁶¹: few higher charged ⁶² with mischief: none attended with less gratification ⁶³: none more imprudent ⁶⁴: none more strictly prohibited ⁶⁵ by God, nor any more generally ⁶⁶ discountenanced by all good men, than lying.

Modern custom has not unaptly divided this vice into two kinds. The former is, generally, adopted by persons, who have in the course of their bad conduct some dark design to gratify: either to create dissention in the neighborhood, to suppress some good, or to forward some bad end. The latter being less artful, and its intentions less mischievous,

reflects, like the pebble from the pavement, smartly in its own face, and, generally speaking, without injury to any one, except itself. It may not be amiss, here, to remark how persons of this dangerous tendency are received in public societies and treated in private circles, which may, and let us hope it will, insensibly operate in checking the shameless career of all such decayed members of the community: and dissuading the young from following their dangerous example. Over the former, lyars cannot, and indeed they ought not, to have any real influence. How should it be otherwise: for we all know a lying tongue is but for a moment⁶⁷. Such characters ought to think themselves very fortunate: if, on public occasions they meet with nothing worse than silent contempt.

In the latter: they generally, are, and, generally, will meet with coolness: but, from kind and social motives, they are, for the most part, admitted to the indulgencies of social intercourse by the good people of England, in common with their neighbors. They, are, perhaps, at first, a little upon the reserve, till the wine sparkleth in the cup, and

in the rapid circulation of the glass, getting off their guard, they begin to display their evil thoughts, and to propagate their falsities. Some, however, are daring, open, and diffuse, always, the latter end of these men being no better than the beginning. Hollow and unsound within, directly they begin to shew themselves unsound without: rattling over rough and smooth, right or wrong: vilifying and defaming without respect to the dead, or fear of the living: as though there was neither a God to love above, or a devil to dread below, at all times, and in all companies. The favorite subject of such persons, differs, according to their different inclinations. Often it will run on public affairs: sometimes on the private concerns of their neighbors, and, at others, it will wander off into tales, which exist in no head but their own. With some, the sole topic is a highly colored display of what they have seen: of what they have heard: of what they know, or of what they possess.

The way to walk uprightly is to walk surely, and the way to walk surely, is not only to hear the word of God; but, to approve and

speak it from the heart, to be firm and inflexible, always, in the cause of truth.

O Thou! whose word endureth for ever in Heaven, the strength of all them that put their trust in Thee, cast thy bright beams of light into my failing heart, that it, so enlightened, may not be tempted, on any occasion, "to speak that which is not." Because through the frailty of my mortal nature I cannot always stand upright, let thy grace, gracious Lord, so prevent and follow me, through the manifold changes of the world, that I may keep my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering: endeavoring to do my duty, day by day, truly, in this state of life, unto which Thou hast been pleased to call me, through the merits of him, who for truth's sake suffered death upon the cross. Amen.

EXTRAVAGANCE.

This sin consists in transgressing the bounds of reason, towards the indulgence of any favorite object. Various are the ways, whereby

men are, often, thus, led to err. Two there are, more common than the rest. To them, therefore, the attention of the reader is, now, particularly requested.

They are Gaiety } of Dress.
 and }
 Luxury } { the Table.

It must be plain, even, to the most superficial observer, that a superintending providence has amply supplied the people of this kingdom with four valuable articles⁶⁸ of raiment, which in the course of trade, are ingeniously manufactured into a beautiful diversity of forms, to suit the real or fanciful convenience of every order, and, to gratify the vanity of the vainest. Of each sort, arrayed in the windows of shops throughout the principal market towns, no one is at full liberty to take indiscriminately, to please his humor; but, to select, rather, with care, such and such only, as are within the easy compass of his purse, and adapted to his state in life, doing all things decently and in order. If, on the contrary, he suffers himself to be hurried down the current of fashion, without œconomy: and trifles away his days in the foppery of dress, neglect-

ing to pay his way, he will ere long find his mistake. What, at first, perhaps, was no more than a venial error, becomes, in time, a dangerous transgression, and ends, at last, in an unpardonable crime. Like the dog in the fable, he gives up the substance for the shadow: he loses the esteem of all good men, and what is far more momentous, forfeits the love of God, to whom, in his infant days, he was bound, and has, now, taken that solemn vow upon himself to renounce the pomp and vanity of the world.

Stupid, indeed, must be the man, who does not see that the same kind being, who provides for the various appetites and different constitutions of mankind, in the different climates of the earth, and in different situations of the world, has displayed his bountiful goodness, in this instance, still more diffusely. Of no one individual article of animal and vegetable food, a variety bordering on infinity, is man forbid to eat. Still, his liberty, in this respect, is conditional, and, for wise reasons, subject to controul: if this had not been so ordered, it would soon degenerate into licentiousness. His passions are to be regulated by the

rules of reason, using the world, as not abusing it. To use the world, means a participation of the divine blessings, day by day, in such manner, as to keep the body in temperance, soberness, and chastity. To abuse it, is to give way to luxury and voluptuousness. Every one may be said to do this, who, in a greater or less degree, consumes either upon himself, carelessly, or knowing permits any part of his family to waste a greater quantity, variety, or more expensive food, than is necessary to the comfortable sustentation of life, consistent with his income, and adapted to his rank : seeking to justify his extravagance by no better argument than the fashion of the times, and the pretended necessity of living like others in the circumjacent neighborhood.

Whatever, then, may be your station on the common theatre of the world : Lord of vast domains : or, should it be “your lot to be lowly born, and to range with humble livers”⁶⁹ “in the open air,” let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. The liberal giver will not fail to punish the extravagant abuser. From time to time

be persuaded to examine your affairs, and to regulate your expences according to your increasing or diminishing revenue. Provide what is necessary, before you venture to indulge in superfluities. Study to do justly, before you assume the vain pomp of liberality. The young, be it understood, are not expected to give up their gaiety : the rich to decline their opulence, nor the great to lay aside their grandeur : but, no one's liberty is to be converted into licentiousness, his opulence into extravagance, or his greatness into tyranny. In the midst of self-enjoyment, forget not what is promised to him, who dealeth bread to the hungry and covereth the naked with a garment. Remember, then, that your well-being in another life depends, in a great degree, upon your sober and temperate behavior in this. Be persuaded, to retreat in time before you be carried too far : lest the harp and the viol invite thee to indulge in the fancied dainties of the table, before your extravagance becomes disgraceful to your character, injurious to your health, hurtful to your affairs, pernicious to the world, and dangerous to your own soul.

O Thou! who art, always, ready to promote the felicity of thy chosen; I thank Thee for the various blessings with which I am surrounded here: give me grace to use such abstinence, as may encourage me to be humane to my inferiors, generous to my equals, and just to all, through the merits of thy son Jesus Christ, who fasted 40 days and 40 nights for my sake. Amen.

REVENGE.

Passions are powerful emotions of the mind, arising, generally from the pleasing expectation of good, or occasioned by the painful apprehension of evil; but, this is different from every other, and is one of the very worst that can afflict the human breast. It proceeds from an impression of a real, or supposed injury received in time past, worked up into a settled determination of returning it in future. While limited to the intention, it is malice. No sooner does it extend to the executive part, than it assumes a name, at which every vir-

tuous man must shudder—Revenge—a sin directly contrary to the mild law of Christianity, inconsistent with the general law of nature, and, punishable by the common law of man.

To prove the first, passages, almost, innumerable may be adduced from Scripture. Two more striking than the rest, it is hoped, will make a due impression upon the young reader's mind. Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people. Such the precept of the celebrated legislator of Israel; but what says the great Christian legislator? If thine enemy hunger, feed him? Why so? Because by so doing, Thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head: meaning, by such kind behavior, we are more likely to soften, and ameliorate a revengeful disposition, than by returning evil for evil, merely for evil-sake without any good to ourselves. In confirmation of the second, it may be asked: whether God's mode of dealing with mankind throughout the spiritual and material world is not one uniform system of love? If, then, the divine being hath so displayed his kindness towards us in his works, ought not we to indicate similar affections in our intercourse with

one another: always remembering, that being, at present, inhabitants of this world, we must in a proper degree, think and act as such: and never forgetting that we are, one day, to become inhabitants of another. With regard to the third — the human, in imitation of the divine law, pardons the infirmity of anger, provided we use such means to suppress it, as reason and religion conjointly recommend, and do all we can to prevent it from hurrying us on to deliberate and distant sin. Whenever that is the case: if, at any time too it unhappily terminates in acts highly injurious to individual or general welfare: it then becomes amenable to different degrees of punishment: and in extreme cases, leads even to death itself.

Seeing how displeasing the indulgence of this passion is to the Almighty, because it militates against the happiness of his creatures: we should each endeavor to walk worthy of the vocation, whereunto we are severally called: in lowliness preferring one another, endeavoring to correct and regulate a passion, which no human being, in its first stage, is ever able utterly to annihilate: though certainly, in a

great degree so to soften and amend, as to prevent its hurrying him on to the commission of those sins, which rarely fail, in a greater or less degree, to bring disgrace or ruin on the head of every such deliberate offender. To effect so necessary and so practicable a work, the following suggestions are, confidently, subjoined.

In resenting a real injury, or pretended affront, consider what object you have in view ! Certainly, either punishment or amendment on one side : security, or satisfaction, on the other. Dangerous, indeed, would it be to the interests of society, to put the former in the hands of the offended. In various instances, therefore, where the divine law, during the present state of things, stands at an awful distance : the human is permitted to interpose. The latter is, generally, much more easily secured by kindness : the fruits of which, even, in the worst instances, are, commonly, immediate satisfaction and future security : for who is he, that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good ?

A forward step of preparation towards meeting offences properly from other people, is to

endeavor, as much as lieth in us, to give none ourselves. It must needs be that offences will come; but, woe to that man, by whom the offence, revengeful, cometh! Cautious conduct in the moral is just as necessary as a steady pilot on the material ocean. It will teach us, to steer safely often, not always. When we do happen to strike, it will either enable us to get clear off, or to manage well what could not be avoided.

A consciousness of offences which we ourselves have individually given, is likely to keep our temper cool and our judgement unclouded against those we are sure, one time or other, to receive in return. To obtain this happy frame of mind, we must reflect often on our own imperfections, and, be constant to pray God to enable us to forgive others, as we hope to be forgiven. In trivial matters, wherein the law of the land is inactive, it is a pretty strong hint that we ought to be inactive too: overlooking some, forgetting others, forgiving more, and revenging none. When we are, thus, impartially, disposed to consider our own conduct: it will be generally found that, whether we look to the offender or offended,

motives for forbearance will appear, much stronger than for resentment.

May all bitterness and wrath : may anger and clamor, and evil-speaking, be put away, from us, with all malice : may we be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake forgiveth us. Amen.

To be said of a sinner

FOR THE YOUNG.

O! Almighty God! Creator and ruler of the world! who hast graciously condescended to bring me into existence, to the powers of my body hast wonderfully united the far more excellent faculties of an immortal soul : by thy providential care hast preserved me through the various perils incident to early years : and hast, now, raised me up towards maturity : make me, I earnestly, pray, who am unable to do any good thing without Thee, thoroughly sensible of the dependant situation wherein I stood with respect to Thee ; of the duty I owe to my neighbor, to my nearest relatives, and to myself, as of that system of universal love

+ set forth in the Gospel of my glorified Redeemer. Sobriety and moderation are virtues incumbent upon all men: but, more especially upon me, who am beginning the public journey of my life. O my Father ! Give me favor in thy sight to take heed, daily, to my ways that I offend not: to ponder my paths, that my footsteps slip not. Industry being the only engine of improvement, the road to every rational delight, the vehicle of public prosperity and of private wealth, teach me, always, to consider time of such inestimable value, as never to suffer one moment to pass idly or unprofitably by. As truth is the foundation and the ornament to every virtue: as falsehood in youth obscures the lustre of every improvement, is the sad and generally unerring presage of perfidy in old age: assist me mercifully with heavenly aid, boldly to withstand the temptations of the world, and to speak the truth freely from my heart, doing upon all occasions by others, as I would they should do unto me.

X As obedience belongs to youth: may I diligently endeavor to learn of Him, who was meek and lowly of heart, never to think of

myself more highly than I ought, but, to seek Thee early, O thou supreme disposer of all events: to behave myself reverently to my parents: submissively to all my betters, whether in knowledge, in station, or, in years; and to treat those kindly, whom Thou hast placed in situations subordinate to my own, remembering always that solemn account, which I must one day give for all the various transactions of my days. May the uncertainty of life's enjoyments check my impetuous desires, and crush my inconsiderate ardor! May the variety of its dangers excite my care, and increase my piety: so that, when Thou mayest be pleased to call me hence, I may, neither, be unwilling to leave this world, nor ashamed to appear in thy presence, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, in the next. Amen.

FOR THE AGED.

In whatever state of life we view the condition of man, his infirmity will be, in no respect, more apparent than in this, now to be

considered. Infirm in the constitution of his body, infirm in the habiliments of his mind, he is, generally, prone to display his infirmity, by complaining of that very thing, which through every intervening period of a long previous life, he has, anxiously, endeavored to obtain. Are you, then, impatient under the infirmities of nature brought on by increasing years? You know, in the morning, what is to come at noon: at noon, what is to succeed at night. Just so! while pleasant summers are gliding on, and social winters passing by; remember, they are soon to come utterly to an end. The kind governor of the world "acts not by severe and partial, but by mild and general laws." This will appear clear to the conviction of every considerate man, who will take the trouble to reflect on what he feels passing within himself, and observes in others. Every moment of our time, more especially "the ever running year," continues to detract from our health, our strength, from the train of our friends and number of our relations, that in the course of 15 or 20 years, after the age of 40, the generality of mankind find their passions continually cooling, and their attractions to

the world daily weakening. As the cheerful morn stimulates to the interests of noon day, so "do the lengthening ⁷⁰ shadows from the hills," accompanied with the increasing cool of the evening, prepare every creature for approaching darkness. If the utmost extremity of life, like the autumnal tree stript of its foliage less liable to be torn up by the fury of the blast, brings pleasures less calculated to please : we ought not to forget that its troubles are less apt to trouble us. Innumerable trials, which formerly rent our hearts, are, now, either, utterly "consigned to the rasure of oblivion," weakened by distant time, or softened by the recollection of what is past and gone. Having enjoyed the vivacity of youth, shared the happiness of manhood, and participated in the general blessings of life : is it not equally irrational and unmanly, to bemoan the natural infirmities of increasing age? In the outset you may, with some reason, fear the various incidents, likely to befall you through the different stages of your pilgrimage here on earth ; but, after you have run your race, you ought not to be unthankful for the perils you have escaped, for the comforts you

possess, as well as for the more substantial joys, which, through the merits of Christ, will be your certain reward in a future world, for your virtuous exertions in the present. The ways of God may, sometimes, seem unequal. Be assured they are all ultimately good. Age, like the night preceded by the declining twilight, takes no one by surprize, nor is it ever forced upon us against our will. Are we not anxious to preserve our health? by the daily choice of our food, by the variety of our cloathing: and if, at any time, we are surprised by accidents, or oppressed by disease: have we not recourse to medicine, ready to leave our home, and if necessity requires to change our climate: Arrived at the last, in the haven where we would be, what cause can any one have to complain of sustaining what he wished for, and what the common lot of existence imposes upon all alike, or with what confidence can he hope to invert the established order of nature? In the animal and vegetable world no sooner has each, in its kind, fulfilled its period, than it verges towards decay, as the sun, daily, to the West. It is as natural for old age to totter, as for the

ripened fruit to fall, or for the autumnal leaf to cover the woodland ground. To this law all that have been, all that are, and all that will be, must submit. Why, then, should any one complain of what is common, of what cannot be avoided, and of what it is his duty patiently to endure? Having finished the perilous tract, and just ready to enter the harbor of tranquillity : be content to contemplate the streights of difficulty and dangers you have escaped, and to look forward without fear towards that “ bourn you are soon sure to pass” forward, to the vast pacific ocean, on which you are soon to embark. Often thank God for the past ! often pray God that in the last little remaining part of your pilgrimage, he may not leave you nor forsake you, and that when it shall seem fit to his supreme wisdom to call you hence, he may support you, in the valley of the Shadow of Death with his staff, and defend you with his rod.

In short, while we are indulged by the divine goodness, with the blessings of health, old age is, in some respects the most desirable : if life has been well spent, the recol-

lection of the past, and the anticipation of the future will afford the most satisfactory delight: if, contrariwise, any one is so unhappy, that he cannot look back with satisfaction, he has, most undoubtedly, this pleasing prospect, a way fairly open to repentance, without which no man must see the Lord, and without the same danger of repeating his former follies.

O Lord! Father and Governor of all my whole life! I thank Thee for the variety of blessings I have continued to receive at thy hand, from my birth unto this distant day: as well as for the numerous evils I have been enabled, through the agency of thy daily providence, to avoid. May my gratitude to Thee be displayed, during the residue of my time, in cheerfully imparting to the young the useful fruits of my long experience, checking the froward, advising the unwary, and instructing all in thy ways, patiently, after the precepts and example of Jesus Christ thy son, my Savior, and my redeemer. Amen.

DEATH.

Man is a compound being consisting of two things, which, though closely connected, are totally different — soul and body. Their union is what we denominate life : the act of separation, death. This in every age has been properly called the king of terrors : because of all human events, it is most awful. The latter we are taught so to regulate by the mild tenets of Christianity in this world, that the former may be happy in the next ! God having, thus, blessed us with every requisite towards the attainment of so glorious an end, the fault will lie, individually, at the door of every one, who is deficient in his duty. The oftener we meditate on this momentous subject, the better, it may fairly be presumed, we shall be prepared, and of course, the more reconciled to our inevitable lot. Whenever we are inclined to indulge in this vein of necessary contemplation : the following obvious reflections may, by God's grace, enable us to meet death with a confidence becoming the

disciples of him, whose life forms a perfect model : whose death a glorious source of triumph to all true believers, and whose resurrection is a plain security of our own : of a translation from the present to a future and better state of existence, eternal in the heavens.

1. Death is the general law of nature, without exception : since the day of christianity⁷², a debt each and every one is bound to pay.

2. The conditions, on which we received life are, that as our forefathers made room for us : just so are we, whenever our creator calls, to give place to our posterity : who, in like manner, as soon as their time is run, will be gathered to their fathers, and a new generation will reign in their stead.

3. If you are unwilling to depart, when the hour of departure comes : you deserve not to have been born. Does not such conduct, at death, “ argue a monstrous life” ?

4. It is just as reasonable, to complain that you did not live sooner, as to lament you are to live no longer : for it matters not how long, but, how well we live⁷³ : which consists not in long prayers without sincerity, nor in pious professions without good works ; but, in an

habitual piety to Almighty God, sincere gratitude to our Savior, and in an active charity towards our fellow creatures. These will be best displayed by a regular deportment at church: and at all other times by the steady practice of all those graces which our blessed Lord uniformly enjoins—to forgive as we hope to be forgiven: to do as we would be done by, to be honest and industrious, sober and temperate in all things, as is elegantly and plainly set forth in the excellent catechism of our church.

5. Whatever divine providence has deemed necessary, to that ought man to submit cheerfully.

6. “All that live must die, passing from nature to eternity.” Why, then, is any one to claim exemption from mortal lot?

7. Immutability belongs only to celestial beings, “while all about us are frail and perishing.” Empires rise, and rule, and fall. “The strongest”⁷⁴ monuments of art moulder into dust.” Between the palace and the cottage, the sovereign and the subject, in this respect there is no distinction. The known and the unknown: the conqueror and the

conquered "travail, alike, the road that leads to death⁷⁵." At the very instant when I expire, thousands will be expiring too⁷⁶. Can that be hard on me, which is as common to all, as for "the seered leaf to fall," or for the water to descend the winter's brook? God's love to mankind is manifest throughout the different stages of life. Why, then, should it be thought otherwise in death, which, is, probably, attended with less pain than what we oft-times experienced?

8. The certainty of so solemn a change liable to happen as we daily see, at all times, to persons of every age and degree: should induce us to meet it properly: and, "not in our peevish opposition to take to heart what we know must be as common as the most vulgar thing to sense."

9. The way to do this, is, to live well always, as though we were soon to die.

10. He who does so, will be prepared and willing to resign his life, whenever it shall please God to take it.

11. A good man is related to both worlds: to the present, by his body: to the future, by

his soul : so is a bad one, though with very different views.

12. It is not sufficient, that we live all-along well and sin at the last, after our passions are cooled, and the pains of death alarmed us. Though God is merciful : let us not forget that the unsullied purity of his nature requires him to be just also : as one star differeth from another star in glory, and as trees of the forest exceed each other in size and beauty : just so may every one, in a future world, expect to be rewarded or punished according to his deserts in the present.

13. Since there is no man living who sinneth not: it will be prudent to take care. He, that standeth, is, ever, liable to fall. Whenever you do wrong, confess yourself to God, and be sorry for it, for he is, ever, more ready to pardon than we to pray, endeavoring continually after this very thing, namely, to shew your repentance by your good works, and to beware lest your last error, in your old age, be worse than the first failings in your youth.

14. It is, indispensably necessary, not only to begin well with life ; but, to persevere

unto the end : keeping in mind, always, the great author and finisher of our faith : for it is the conclusion, that must determine our everlasting doom.

15. The general tenor of the Gospel discourages all ideas of forgiveness without repentance. If, then, any one should be cut off in the midst of his unrepented sins, how can such an one expect to be forgiven ?

16. Since our bountiful Lord will not fail to reward all the good we do : why should we neglect to do any when such negligence will only lessen our reward : or why should we be content to lose any degree of glory ? Behold the various lustre of the stars ! consider the different lilies of the field !

17. When we die, be assured we do not cease to be, nor cease to feel : but, cease only to live, as we have done in these earthly bodies.

18. We were sent into this world, not merely to enjoy : nor merely to suffer : but to prepare ourselves for another. As we use it, then : so will it prove, either our friend or foe.

“ O Thou ! who lendest me life, lend me a heart replete with thankfulness to Thee,” for

the prolongation of my existence unto this hour, and for the unnumbered instances of thy goodness in every intervening period thereof. A variety of active duties it is incumbent on me, daily, to perform, as well as many temptations, which surround me, to avoid. Fallible I am: I have often failed: remember not, Lord, my former failings I beseech Thee, neither take Thou vengeance of my sins: pardon them through the intercession of my Savior, and dispose me by thy grace so to pass the various perils of this present scene, that I may neither too anxiously wish, nor over much dread the last.

Finally, may I find mercy on that day, when I shall see my blessed Redeemer, coming in the clouds of heaven, and happiness, through his merits in the world to come. Amen.

JUDGEMENT.

The design of our Savior's first coming was, the reformation and happiness of the human race. To accomplish this, nothing was left

undone that could be done by precept and example from the beginning to the end of his life, which was finally, sacrificed for their sakes. Not satisfied with these acts of goodness, he hath given an individual instance of his constant love towards mankind by an admirable system of rules contained in the Gospels suitably adapted for the direction of their conduct throughout a long succession of intervening ages, from the dawn of christianity to the final consummation of all things.

Our natural abilities, favored more or less by the state of life whereunto we are severally called, aided by the excellence of our laws, and still further favored by the salutary principles of christianity, of which no one in this country need be ignorant, conjointly enable us so to improve ourselves through life, as to become at the close thereof, acceptable in the divine sight. The advantage thus proffered to every human being, is, in the figurative language of scripture, styled the talent entrusted to his care, during his Lord's absence, to improve. Somewhat different, indeed, though equally benevolent, is the intention of our Lord's second coming. As the

former was to distribute his talents : so the latter will be to scrutinize our accounts : that is, to see what respective degrees of improvement we have each made in our religious store, to reward our industry, or punish our inactivity. This investigation, so serious, and so important in its consequences to each, will most assuredly take place on the last solemn “all ending day :” when God will judge the world in righteousness : when the heaven shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat : when the earth, also, and, the works that are therein shall be burned up : when they that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved : what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness : looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of our Lord Jesus Christ ?

The day of judgement, then, will be an event attended with a catastrophe awful far beyond what hath, yet, entered into the mind of man to conceive : the final destruction of the world by fire. It is, in fact, an article of

our faith, often alluded to in the Old Testament, clearly predicted in the New, suggested by the daily appearances of nature, and confirmed by reason : which ought to awaken the unwary, check the presumptuous, animate the weak, bring all to a sense of recollection, to exalt our sentiments, and to purify our lives.

Almighty Father ! who hast given us thine only son to take our nature upon him, to reform us by the purity of his doctrine and to edify us by the brightness of his example : make us so sensible of this inestimable benefit as may enable us to serve Thee, throughout this present life : that, in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, and the holy ghost, now, and for ever. Amen.

NOTES AND QUOTATIONS.

The Old and New Testament, at least, and the Works of our immortal bard, it is presumed, are so well known to the generality of readers, that particular references would be needless. To the two former there are 314 allusions, to the latter 30. These together with the quotations from other authors are placed between inverted commas.

¹ Nemo repenti, &c. Juv.

² Venienti occurritte morbo. Hor.

³ Hence the custom of affixing, in conspicuous characters, striking quotations from Scripture on the interior walls of churches.

⁴ We are favored with a remarkable instance to this effect, in the history of king Asa, one amongst the few virtuous sovereigns of the house of Judah, though his conduct, in some respects, was extremely exceptionable. While it displays, in the most lively colors, the superintending providence of God, it presents us, with a poor melancholy picture of the pride and folly of man. 2 Chron. 16. which for the singular elegance of its style, as well as for the sublimity of its important contents, is devoutly recommended

to the attention of the young and inconsiderate reader.

⁵ A number of people together, it may be remarked, upon different occasions, acquire different names, as the parliament in England, the congress in America, the audience in a play house, the meeting of dissenters, and the congregation met to worship God in public, according to the established form.

⁶ Pope's Essay on Man.

⁷ Humanum est errare, Ter.

⁸ There is none that doeth good, &c. Ps.

⁹ ταῦτ' ἔν διηνεκῶς σρεφοντες, καὶ, ἀναλογιζόμενοι, ἐκαθάρωμεν ἡμῶν τον βιον καὶ, λαμπρον ποιήσωμεν. Chrys.

¹⁰ Hæc studia pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur. Cic.

¹¹ Sol aureus. Virg.

¹² In less than 70 years after the crucifixion, the Apostles and Evangelists, no more than 16 persons preached the Gospel over the whole of what was then called the civilized world, from the Tigris and the Caspian in the East, to the Mediterranean shores on the West; a tract of more than 4000 miles, and extending from North to South, on a fair average, full 1300, taking the Danube, Euxine, and the country in the same parallel on one side with the African States, the Lower Egypt, Arabia to the mouth of the Euphrates on the other, comprehending within its immense space the vast countries of Mesopotamia,

Caldea, Assyria, Armenia, the numerous and populous cities of the Minor-Asia, Greece, great part of Italy, together with the Mediterranean islands, and, as some say, Spain, Gaul, and even Britain; besides the states of Germany, Syria, and Arabia. It is to be feared, that these momentous labors of the first propagators of christianity appear, almost, incredible to the young, timid, and heedless professor of christianity; but, it is, moreover, to be ardently hoped, that they will, seriously, operate as weekly incentives, at least, in the minds, both of priest and people towards the faithful discharge of their several duties: which, though in some instances attended with difficulty, are still not to be set in competition with what our early ancestors even in this country had to contend.

¹³ Moses had not only the important charge of protecting the Israelites against the tyranny of Pharaoh, of conducting them amidst the perils of the country, safely through the Red Sea, leading them through dangerous deserts, warning them against the idolatry of heathen nations, and providing for their wants; but, he was commissioned by the special favor of the Almighty with the promulgation of his laws.

¹⁴ The celebrated legislator of Israel was succeeded by Joshua, who conducted the people into the promised land, where the Lord was with him as he had been with Moses, by signs, and by wonders, and by

mighty deeds, in leading their armies, in conquering their enemies, in taking cities, in working miracles, and by exhorting men to universal obedience.

¹⁵ Asa. The reign of this prince is distinguished by no marks of particular activity. In the beginning, he behaved wisely and piously, by expelling the idolatrous people, overthrowing the Æthiopians through God's assistance, and, in building cities; but, its close was disgraced by bribing Benhadad, king of Syria, instead of relying upon the Almighty against Baasha king of Israel.

¹⁶ Josiah's memory is justly entitled to the veneration of the most distant posterity, and to the particular imitation of modern princes, for as much as he endeavored to extirpate idolatry, and to re-establish the true religion. The only warlike act which he attempted, was his rash attack upon Pharaoh-neco, who slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him.

¹⁷ This vast luminary, though stationary in the centre of our system, revolves on its own axis: that is to say in other words, though relieved from the prodigious degree of motion of revolving round the earth every twenty-four hours as the antients supposed, it is not a body perfectly quiescent: for the spots on its disk prove a revolution in the place, where it is fixed, in 27 days and a half.

¹⁸ The periodic time of a planet, is the space it takes up in going from any part of its orbit round the sun and returning to the same: that of the pla-

net Mercury, which is nearest the sun, is little more than three months. It varies in the rest, according to their distance: till, in the Georgium Sidus, the year is encreased to the enormous length of 80 of our revolutions.

¹⁹ There is no period of the year, by night or by day, during the hottest or coldest weather, wherein evaporation ceases. Let any one, faithless as to this assertion, invert a glass tumbler on a scorched grass plot, or an arid fallows, during the days of raging Sirius. In a short space, its internal surface will be covered with a dew, which unless the vessel is soon turned, will be discharged copiously down the sides upon the ground, in drops. If the weight, superficies, and time of inversion, be each previously taken, and correctly compared with the adventitious weight of the whole surface of an acre of land in a similar state of aridity, and within the space of a summer's day: it will be found, that a quantity between 1400 and 1800 gallons of water is, thus insensibly exhaled, during this period. Who, then, blessed with a portion of land, can be so senseless as not, in this instance, to discern, and so ungrateful as not to adore, the wise ruler of the world: who, continually, provides for the wants of all his children, by different modes of rendering the earth fruitful. This is, sometimes effected by inundation: as in the plains of the Lower Egypt, where it never rains: at other, by watering the vallies with the fertile showers; but,

more generally by the inestimable, though less noticed blessing, the dew.

²⁰ The earth's surface, generally, speaking, cannot be said to be perfectly quiescent. It is ploughed, turned over, and torn diverse ways, by man: cut and disturbed by quadrupeds, scratched and pecked by fowls, perforated by insects, lightened by vegetation, swept by winds, sodden by rains, and elevated by frosts, contracted by cold, and expanded by heat. The particles of water being perfectly hard and globular, it is impossible for its surface to be perfectly smooth. The rocky parts alone in some degree may be called stationary: yet, these are subject to attrition, and being small in comparison with all others, can be said to detract no more from the moveable state of the whole, than the numerous inequalities, as pits, mines, caverns, and valleys on its surface, from the general rotundity.

²¹ This medium, every one must know, is in a perpetual flux. It admits various degrees of compression and expansion, inconceivable to a finite capacity.

²² Many creatures are superior in strength and swiftness; but, to none is given such a commanding aptitude of form. None are capable of enduring such persevering fatigue, of planning and executing such designs: none, with so little inconvenience, at least, are able to exist in all climates. The dog from affection is led to accompany its master, though

*The
act
of
bearing
in
rubbing*

there are various islands and vast tracts of continents where it is not indigenous.

²³ This is a blessing peculiarly limited to the human race.

²⁴ Though inferior to the former, it is still an endowment of inconceivable value ; for what would be the condition of mankind, with neither speech nor language ?

²⁵ There is no country, wherein the liberty of its subjects is more indiscriminately protected, and where licentiousness is more generally discountenanced. Others, no doubt, enjoy a more perfect serenity of sky, and excell in the richness and rarity of particular productions ; but in what region of the earth is it the lot of man to dwell, where there is such an union of blessings natural and acquired, as in England ?

²⁶ This has been and ever will be the case, while hostile armies are in motion at a distance from their respective countries.

²⁷ A mine is a place formed by man under the surface of the earth ; where metals, minerals, fuel, or precious stones are found. As these produce different materials, so they accordingly acquire different names, gold, silver, diamond, iron, tin, lead, copper, coal mines, &c. In working these each country employs a great number of its subjects. In some, as under the arbitrary government of Spain and Rus-

sia, criminals are condemned to spend the wretched residue of their days. In others, particularly in the salt works of Poland, dwellings are formed, where the inhabitants by choice, pass a contented subterraneous life.

²⁸ Any one is not only liable to be impressed on ship-board ; but, to serve his majesty without limitation as to time, country, or commander. Surely, then, all such, whose merits or vocations enable them to escape this forced and dangerous warfare ought to shew forth all their gratitude, by relieving those poor distressed seamen, whom they occasionally meet worn out, or wounded in defence of their country. The law authorizing the impress of seamen seems to carry the appearance of Russian slavery or Turkish despotism—a law, which every advocate for civil and religious liberty naturally wishes either to be totally abrogated, or fairly commuted. The utmost such an one can possibly say in its defence, and he cannot say, even, that, with a very good grace : is, it is supposed, at present, to be an act of imperious necessity.

²⁹ It is found necessary to keep military stations on the northern frontiers of Indostan, as well as on the confines of Canada, where the cold exceeds the utmost degree of what is felt during the rigor of a British winter.

³⁰ Remember the fate of him, who kept his Lord's talent in a napkin.

³¹ ——— Ut melius, quicquid erit pati! Hor.

³² ————— O si angulus ille

Proximus accedat, qui nunc denormat Agellum!

Hor.

³³ Richard III. on the very morning just previous to the decisive battle of Bosworth.

³⁴ Wicked and artful laborers, who designedly fill their pockets or shoes with corn at every return to their meals, persuading themselves there is no harm, because so small a quantity will neither be missed nor felt, are just as bad as they who dare to take as much at one time. The eyes of the Lord, which are 1000 times brighter than the sun, and purer than to behold evil, will not fail sooner or later to bring to light the hidden things of darkness and dishonesty.

³⁵ See the 12 first verses of our blessed Lord's Sermon upon the Mount: wherein a blessing is promised to all such as severally excell in different religious virtues.

³⁶ Parvis componere, &c. Virg.

³⁷ In the naval, military, and ecclesiastical line, instances, not a few, have occurred within the memory of the existing race. A certain prime minister, not half a century ago, more to be respected for his good humor than sound policy, replied to an acquaintance, jocosely remonstrating on his presuming to elevate his brother to a bishoprick, at so early an age!

Tu, dum tua navis, &c. Hor.

³⁸ Pope's Essay on Man.

³⁹ See the meditations of the heroic sovereign, on the night previous to the battle of Agincourt, where the English, animated by the conduct of their leader, obtained a signal victory against a fearful disparity of numbers.

⁴⁰ Read the affectionate blessing, wherewith Isaac blessed his beloved Esau.

⁴¹ Mercy, even to his beast, is mentioned by Solomon as a striking feature in the character of a righteous man.

⁴² *Quæ regio in terris, &c. Virg.*

⁴³ Boulogne sur la mer, and the cliffs a little to the south of Dover, correspond as nearly as two contiguous leaves of a book.

⁴⁴ Derbyshire presents the nearest examples.

⁴⁵ In various parts of the northern counties.

⁴⁶ Vesuvius, *Ætna*, *Hecla*, or the Andes, and the inmost Asia.

⁴⁷ Syria.

⁴⁸ *Herculaneum* and *Pompeii* are said to have suffered by an earthquake, about A. D. 62, and in 15 years afterwards, to have been buried by a fiery eruption of *Vesuvius*, and discovered 1730.

⁴⁹ The first was nearly destroyed in 1755. The second suffered very much by the same awful visitation, in 1799; and the third in 1812.

⁵⁰ The former was at the northern, the latter at the southern extremity of the promised land. They

are commonly used, to signify the general extent of a country from one end to the other.

⁵¹ Did any one ever observe this tremendous instrument of omnipotence attack the strongest works of nature or of art, without effect? Scarcely a summer passeth by, but we hear, in most neighborhoods, either some human beings, or, cattle falling, indiscriminately, sudden victims of this awful visitation.

⁵² Sub dio morari. Hor.

⁵³ Hence the periodical inundations of the Nile.

⁵⁴ Northern winds in autumn, winter, and spring, produce cold : for the very same reason, and at a little after the summer solstice they are, sometimes attended with heat, even while the sky with us continues dark and lowering. The reason is evidently this : the immeasurable flats over which they sweep, are, in the former case, covered with snow, sealed up with frost, and darkness broodeth over the face of the waters : in the latter, they are brightened and heated with continual sunshine. Of course it follows that the winds traversing over the same regions, at different seasons of the year, arrive at the shores of our North, charged with the cold air at one period and with hot at another.

⁵⁵ Labor omnia vincit improbus. Virg.

⁵⁶ With such like animated expressions, of a cast peculiar to himself, the three first volumes of Blair's sermons generally abound.

⁵⁷ The above sentiments, it is presumed, are perfectly consonant to the universal tenor of the Holy Scriptures, from one end to the other; but, in no part of the Old Testament do they strike the mind of the attentive reader with greater energy and truth, than throughout the whole virtuous administration of Moses over the rebellious Israelites: as well as of Job, under a load of the most aggravated and oppressive evils: if we refer to the sacred pages of the New, we shall there find patience under misfortunes, perseverance under difficulties, and industry in every vocation, recommended in the most forcible and lively manner, both by the precept and example of the Son of God, and of his faithful followers.

⁵⁸ Being thoroughly ignorant of surgery, as well as of the whole materia medica, I hope to be excused, should it appear that I have presumed too much in venturing to say the hard-drinker is liable, sooner or later to be attacked with the following maladies.

1. Inflammations of two kinds.

Internal, which cause sudden and bring on lingering death.

External, which are displayed plainly, and, various ways, in the features.

2. Corpulency more generally: which terminates sometimes in swollen limbs, often in apoplexy, suffocation, diseased liver, low spirits, dropsy, &c.

3. Emaciation, attended with a faltering voice,

weeping eye, a gastly countenance, shaking hand, tottering gait, and a total loss of strength.

To the above may, perhaps, be added :

Gout.

Jauudice.

Indigestion.

Failing memory.

Fits.

Idiotism.

Melancholy.

Madness.

Premature old age.

and

Disgraceful death.

It is, moreover, asserted by a physician, whose memory stands high in the medical world, that those very diseases arising from drinking spirits, are liable to become hereditary, and consequently to continue through several generations.

⁵⁹ ——— *plausæ sonitum cervicis amatae. Virg.*

⁶⁰ Disgrace, derange, &c. Whan can be more disreputable to any man, it matters not what his rank in life is, than to have it said—the truth is not in him. — What more grievous to parents, more cutting to children, or more distressing to relations, than to hear a lying tongue? what more likely to overthrow the social comforts of a neighbourhood?

⁶¹ More common. It requires little discernment to find either some foolish babblér, or some artful di-

viner in any populous town, and, too often in the smallest village.

⁶² Higher charged, &c. What more fertile source of evil? what more apt to sow the seeds of discord, than a lying tongue, which is justly stiled an abomination to the Lord.

⁶³ Attended with less gratification. That some sins afford a temporary pleasure, as theft to gratify the appetite, taking a purse to procure some article of avarice, vanity, or ambition, cannot be denied; but, in such mere wanton, glaring falsehoods, as frequently make the righteous sad, where is the delight, or from what impure fountain can such unaccountable propensity arise, except in a bad heart, and where is it likely to terminate unless in contempt, in misery, and without repentance, in everlasting death?

⁶⁴ None more imprudent. A false man may, by his falseness, conceal his falseness a little while in a strange country, and, impose upon strangers in his own; but, the real worthless trait of such a worthless character is as well known in his neighborhood, as the door of the church or the hand of the town clock. Where, then, is such a man's prudence; who dares, thus, to transgress, daily, in open daylight, against the positive command of his God, whom we see continually frustrating the tokens of the lyars and making diviners mad?

§ More strictly prohibited by God. Certainly in the ninth commandment. The words do not allude to false testimony given against any one in a court of justice, or before a magistrate only; but, they imply every kind of falsehood, purposely fabricated or propagated to the injury of another behind his back, and, which the attentive reader finds discouraged, in every form, universally, throughout the Scriptures. Consider what happened to those dissemblers, Gehazi, Ananias, and to Saphira. If these dreadful examples, thus purposely recorded, are insufficient to deter, be persuaded, reader, to peruse, carefully, the Proverbs of Solomon, and to reflect seriously on the life of our blessed Savior and his holy Apostles.

66 Discountenanced by all good men. No sooner does any one venture to deviate from the high road of truth, than his word becomes immediately tainted: nor is it possible to recover its former validity, any more than to restore wool once dyed to its original whiteness; but, the very first moment a man is detected in a deliberate lye, however high his public estimation before time, his character, now, like the wheat in August touched with the deadly blight, is as sure to perish, as the knarled oak struck with the resistless thunderbolt. We see, indeed, not unfrequently such unhappy instances of infirmity still existing. Charitable minds will continue to treat them charitably; but, being depressed below the common

level of estimation, who can esteem or who can trust them ?

⁶⁷ In holy writ, to persons of this unhappy cast no less than 12 different appellations are affixed.

1. Lyars.
2. Babblers.
3. Hypocrites.
4. Dissemblers.
5. Diviners.
6. Inventors.
7. Forgers.
8. Falsewitnesses.
9. Perjured persons.
10. Proud Boasters.
11. False Prophets.
12. Deceivers.

In most parts of our own kingdom, at least, the morality and good sense of the people seldom fail to stigmatize this class of delinquents with different titles of sarcastic opprobrium, proportioned to the scale of their respective delinquency.

1. A person in the higher walks of life, so unhappily addicted, is, modestly, called by the common people a sad man.

2. If of the middle order in society, cool, prompt, and witty in detailing his falsehoods, his name is tatler : the productions of such an one are good-ons, bangers, long shots, &c.

3. 'The lowest degree retort still more plainly upon one another, in terms pointed and reproachful. A common lyar, and a sly hypocritical fellow, are expressions generally applied without fear or reserve to the offender's face. The epithets—infamous and abominable—are often, indiscriminately applied to each.

⁶⁸ Woollen, linen, cotton, and silk.

⁶⁹ Persons employed in all kinds of rural labor, ploughing, sowing, &c.

⁷⁰ *Majoresque cadunt altis de montibus umbræ.*
Virg.

⁷¹ P. 176. Day of Christianity, &c.]—Elijah, a native of Tishbe. The life of this eminent prophet, was so eminently good, that God condescended to preserve it, for a long time together by a continual miracle; and, at length, to take him up to heaven, without permitting him to pass through the common gate of death.

⁷² P. 176. Reign in their stead.]—It is not unusual to hear persons, verging fast toward the evening of life, desirous to revert to the morning, and to run the day over again. To say nothing of the impiety of such a thought; let them only reflect awhile on a few of the most obvious consequences, which must unavoidably attend the supposed unnatural prolongation of human existence. Within the short period of 30 years, taking

all classes as to age and situation, fairly, on an average : the old are swept away, and a new race exalted in its stead. So that this village, which, with its adjunct contains about 700 inhabitants, would in 1843 have no less than 1400 : in 1873 its number would be 2100, excluding the supposition that none but the younger class only continue to propagate. Behold ! in this case, what an insuperable host of difficulties is immediately presented to one's view : the most obvious of which are as to food, raiment, and dwelling : besides "a countless multitude" of others, inferior indeed, though still of indispensable importance to the general welfare : such as seats in the church, horses to carry, oxen to support, and sheep to cloath us. Besides, if every individual may be supposed, though not to die, yet, not to continue in one stay without deteriorating with increasing time, it is far beyond the most fertile genius to imagine what a scene of confusion such a wretched neighborhood of mandarine daddies, each accompanied by his poor withered dame, neither distinguishing, distinguished, nor distinguishable from one another, would actually make.

⁷³ Non refert quam diù, sed quam benè vixeris. Sallust.

⁷⁴ P. 177, "While all about us are frail and perishing."—"Omnes res humanæ fragiles caducæque sunt." Cic.

“The strongest monuments, &c.

“Quandoquidem data sunt ipsis quoque Fata sepulchris.” Juv.

⁷⁵ ——— sed omnes una manet nox,

Et calcanda semel via lethi. Hor.

⁷⁶ If the immense number of the human species is considered, no one will doubt this.

⁷⁷ P. 180. When we die, &c.—Sherlock.

CONCLUSION.

I am persuaded, friends and brethren, that, in the perusal of these previous pages, you will continue to exercise the same fervent charity, both with regard to the errors of the printer and failings of the author, which during 18 years of my residence among you, we have mutually practiced one with another—a virtue upon which our happiness in this world very much depends, and upon which our brightest hopes in another confidently rest.

P. 17. line 9, *for when read which.*

167. line 21, *for stood read stand.*

"Richard Baxter, revered for his good
sense, as well as fervent piety, has
used these remarkable expressions.
"I am not so foolish as to pretend
my certainty to be greater than it
is, merely because it is a dishonor
to be less certain; nor will I by shame
be kept from confessing those imper-
fections which thou have as much
as I, who hypocritically reproach
me with them. My certainty
that I am a man, is before my
certainty that there is a God; my
certainty that there is a God, is
greater than my certainty that
he requirith love and holiness of
his creatures; my certainty of
this, is greater than my certain-
ty of the life of reward and punish-
ment hereafter; my certainty of
that is greater than my certainty of
the endless duration of it, and of the
immortality of individual souls.
My certainty of the Deity, is greater

than my certainty of the Christian
faith; my certainty of the Christian
faith in its essentials is
greater than my certainty of
the perfection and infallibility
of the Holy Scriptures; my
certainty of that is greater
than my certainty of many
particular texts, and so of the
truth of many particular
doctrines, or of the inerran-
ciness of some certain books.
So that as you see by what
gradations my understand-
ing doth proceed, so also
that my certainty differeth as
the evidence differ. and
they that have attained to
a greater perfection and a
higher degree of certainty
than I, should pity me.

Even then says "It were
to be wished that this accurate

statement of the nature and
degrees of belief were duly
impressed on the minds
every Christian; & the want
of it must be ascribed to
prevalence of an ignorant
and besotted bigotry."

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